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Christ Episcopal Church

In Guilford, Connecticut.

Samuel
Johnson





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Samuel Johnson

A HISTORY
OF
Christ Episcopal Church
IN
GUILFORD, CONNECTICUT.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE RECTOR, REV. WILLIAM
G. ANDREWS, IN SEPTEMBER, 1894, ON THE OCCASION
OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PARISH.

FROM THE PRESS OF
THE ECHO, GUILFORD, CONN.
1895.

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INTRODUCTORY.

The following address has been revised and somewhat enlarged, and portions omitted in the delivery are now inserted. A few corrections have been made. It is based to a considerable extent on early records faithfully preserved by the Rev. David Baldwin, and now courteously transferred to the parish. They were consulted many years ago by the historian of Guilford, Hon. Ralph D. Smith, but had long been lost sight of. Other sources of information are mentioned in the notes. I must, however, express more distinctly my obligations to one of Mr. Smith's manuscripts, kindly placed in my hands by his grandson, Bernard C. Steiner, Ph. D., of Baltimore, and to Dr. Talcott's priceless collection of genealogies, made easily accessible to residents of Guilford by the unselfish diligence of the late Mr. Alfred G. Hull and his associates in the task of copying the volume. Guilford is uncommonly fortunate in having had among her citizens two such untiring students of local records as Mr. Smith and Dr. Talcott. It is impossible to name all who have aided me in my work, grateful as I have had reason to be to many friends in Guilford and elsewhere for assistance of various kinds. But I must add to the names given in the notes those of Mr. Charles H. Post of Guilford, the Rev. Wilfred H. Dean and Mr. Jerome Coan of North Guilford, Mr. Eli F. Rogers of Branford, the Rev. J. Frederick Sexton of Cheshire, Miss Elizabeth M. Beardsley of New Haven, and Mrs. Susan Johnson Hudson and Miss Russell of Stratford. All who may be interested in the story of the parish owe much to the enterprise and historical tastes of Mr. Frederick C. Norton of Guilford for the appearance of the address in its present form.

Some account of our commemorative services ought to be given, though there is space only for an outline. At ten o'clock Bishop Williams (who warmly sympathized with the gladness which his presence so much increased), confirmed two candidates (having confirmed a larger class in May), and addressed

the congregation. He spoke of the significance of such anniversaries in their threefold bearing—on the past, the present, and the future. At the second service, held at a quarter before eleven, the Bishop was assisted in the celebration of the Holy Communion by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Ruggles Pynchon, the Rev. Dr. Samuel Hart, and the rector. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. George D. Johnson from 1 Kings xix. 4: "Now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." The sentiment underlying Elijah's half-despairing cry was developed with much force and beauty. As life goes on and we look back over our past, we often seem to ourselves to have failed. But God's work is advancing, and His faithful servants cannot really fail.

Drs. Pynchon, Hart and Johnson are all of Guilford stock. The first, formerly president of Trinity College, is descended from the two Congregational pastors whose name he bears; the second, also of Trinity College, and secretary of the House of Bishops, is descended from the Rev. John Hart of East Guilford (now Madison), who in 1722 had nearly resolved to apply for episcopal ordination with Timothy Cutler and Samuel Johnson; the third is descended from the distinguished clergyman last named, a native of Guilford, as also from the great Puritan divine, Jonathan Edwards.

In the evening prayers were read from the old folio Prayer Book, probably brought from England in 1764 by the Rev. Bela Hubbard. The Rev. W. H. Dean, rector of St. John's Church, North Guilford, which was until 1834 generally united in one cure with Guilford, performed this service. His English birth, combined with his American orders, gave his participation additional interest, since the predecessors of the existing congregation, while Americans by birth, not only belonged to the Church of England, but thought of themselves as Englishmen and of England as "home."

Among those who took part in the commemoration as worshipers were descendants of Samuel Smithson, of Nathaniel Johnson, of Bela Hubbard, of Andrew Ward, of Friend Collins, of Thomas Powers, and doubtless of various others who are named in the following pages. In the evening the Methodist and the two Congregational churches were closed, and their

pastors, the Rev. Otis J. Range, the Rev. Geo. W. Banks and the Rev. Frederick E. Snow, were present by invitation, with many members of their congregations, to rejoice with us as being all members of one Body. The prayer, "For the Unity of God's People," which Samuel Johnson can hardly have found in Samuel Smithson's Prayer Book, though it had already been set forth in England (1714), is in our venerable folio. Its use on this occasion might have recalled Dr. Johnson's efforts in behalf of comprehension, as well as the belief of Thomas Rugles, that the early days, when perhaps not a single Christian in Guilford had consciously separated from the Church of England, still continued.

A beautiful set of communion linen, the gift of Mrs. Aletha C. Graves, was used for the first time in the morning. And the anniversary was a far more joyful one for the knowledge that the effort to signalize it by the extinction of a debt of between eleven and twelve hundred dollars, begun just before Lent, had been entirely successful. Summer parishioners, as well as former members of the congregation or their representatives, had given indispensable aid, but the greater part of the task was performed by those whose homes are here, and at least half of it by the ladies.

EARLY HISTORY

OF

Christ Church Parish, Guilford, Conn.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE ONE HUNDRED
AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PARISH, SEPTEMBER 16,
1894, BY THE RECTOR, WILLIAM G. ANDREWS.

On the fourth of September, 1744 (old style), or one hundred and fifty years ago yesterday, what was then called a "vestry," and would now be called a parish meeting, "was held at the house of William Ward in Guilford. Nathaniel Johnson and William Ward were appointed Church Wardens for the year ensuing; and Samuel Collins appointed Clerk. It was likewise agreed upon that the Professors of the Church of England meet in order to Carry on worship by reading a form of Prayers & Sermons by themselves." The "Memorandum" which I quote, and which is the oldest of our parish documents (unexpectedly recovered, with others, during the past year), is signed by "James Lyons, minister," and the two wardens. The action which it records was the organization of the parish, as is clearly proved by a statement of two who took part in it, made many years later.¹ But although the proper date of our anniversary is thus fixed, the gradual process of which the organization was one result, had begun nearly thirty years before. And we must go even farther into the past than this. The minister of the First (Congregational) Church, Thomas Ruggles the younger, afterwards virtually accused the conformists of committing schism in setting up worship "by themselves." They had, he declared, no sufficient ground for their proceedings, inasmuch as his church was and always had been a congregation of the

¹ *Church Documents, Connecticut*, ii. 126-7.

Church of England.¹ We ought, then, to look back at least two hundred and fifty years in order to ascertain what the national church really was to the Puritan emigrants, and whether they had preserved enough of what most Englishmen valued it for to satisfy reasonable Christians. This will help us to decide whether Nathaniel Johnson and his friends had, in fact, committed schism.

To the larger part of the early Puritans, in New England as in England, the national church was unquestionably their spiritual mother, communicating to them as they gladly confessed their part "in the common salvation."² It embodied the Christianity of their nation, and in the belief of Puritans, not less than of Anglicans, it was its office as a national church to maintain the religious unity of English Christians, and, still more, to provide every Englishman, who did not plainly show himself unworthy, with access to all the means of grace, that he might live and die as becomes a Christian. To have such access was a dearly cherished right, though in a national, and especially in an established church, it might be grievously abused. By slow degrees Episcopal government and liturgical worship had become, in Puritan eyes, first offensive and then unlawful. But these were regarded as only blemishes on the system, and might be removed without destroying it. And the founders of Guilford had hardly finished their first dwelling-houses, and probably had not begun their first meeting-house, when the Long Parliament met (Nov. 3, 1640), with the purpose of reforming the church. And about three months after they had reared their spiritual house of Christian souls on its seven "pillars"³ (June 19, 1643), the commons of England had sworn to abolish Episcopacy, and, by implication, to abandon the Prayer-Book. (Sept. 25, 1643.) As these and similar changes were accomplished it did not seem to the exiles that the Church of England was disappearing, but rather, that she was becoming "all glorious within." And although the English establishment was never fully con-

¹ "History of Guilford," in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, First Series, iv. 186.

² "Humble Request," etc., 1630. Quoted from Hutchinson's *History of Massachusetts*, i. 431, by Coit, Dexter and others.

³ The word "pillars" does not appear in the Guilford Records, but is likely to have been used here as in New Haven.

formed to the New England model, it grew so attractive to the emigrants that many of them went back to enjoy the fruits of the new reformation. One of these returning pilgrims was Henry Whitfield, the first minister of Guilford, and first of the seven pillars. He is understood to have accepted a living in the city of Winchester, and, if so, he was, during the last years of his life, in his own belief, as truly a minister of the Church of England as when, long before, he had been the conforming rector of Ockley. And in one important particular he must have departed from the New England model. Besides dispensing with bishops and a liturgy, the Puritans here, unlike those of England and Scotland, had attempted, not unnaturally, though with some misgivings, to guard the sacraments against the approach of unholy men, by requiring a "relation of experiences" from all who desired to be communicants, while only communicants could obtain baptism for their children. This rule excluded a large number of sincere Christians of calm temperament from the use of the sacraments, and was at least as serious an invasion of those equal rights which it belongs to the church to maintain as was, for example, the requirement, so offensive to many Puritans, of kneeling at the Lord's table. In Winchester, if he had a parish there, and if the ordinances of Parliament were obeyed, Henry Whitfield could deprive no member of his congregation of full Christian privileges unless he were grossly ignorant or openly wicked, of which matters Parliament was to be the final judge.¹

The second of the seven original members of the Guilford church—John Higginson, Whitfield's son-in-law, associate and successor—would have returned to England in 1659, but for a shipwreck which finally fixed his home in Massachusetts. And he doubtless would also have served in the national church while it remained under Puritan control, and would have conformed to the churchly rule about the administration of the sacraments which he and Whitfield had helped to set aside here. And we have, I think, sufficient reason for believing that he treasured in his memory to the end of his long life, words which he heard from the lips of his own father, as they looked back

¹ Neal's *History of Puritans*. London, 1837; ii. 276, 370-1, 379, 511, 610-11.

together, from the deck of the ship which was bearing them westward, on the granite cliffs of Cornwall. Then, as we are told, Francis Higginson utterly repudiated the names which the Separatists gave to the English church, of "Babylon" and "Rome," and cried: "Farewel, dear England! Farewel, the Church of God in England! . . . We do not go . . . as Separatists . . . but . . . to practice the positive Part of Church Reformation."¹

It is also highly probable that two more of the seven, Whitfield's other son-in-law, Samuel Desborough, and John Hoadly, who acted for a while as a Puritan minister in Scotland, both died in the communion of the Church of England, after bishops and Prayer Book had been restored. Whether this was true of Hoadly or not, we know that two of his sons, born near the northwest corner of the Green, took episcopal orders. It is practically certain that the first natives of Guilford who assumed the ministerial office—the first "ministers raised up," as the phrase is, in the ancient Puritan congregation established here—were Episcopalians. If that congregation was not, in those days, as Mr. Ruggles declared, a congregation of the Church of England, the separation was scarcely felt, and even a return, in England, to the historic order and worship, was not difficult.

And while John Higginson was still pastor of Guilford, that right of access to the sacraments on the part of reputable professors of Christianity which it was characteristic of Congregational Puritanism to limit unwarrantably, and which Whitfield must, and Higginson probably would, have conceded at home, began to be demanded in the colonies (1656, or earlier). The demand was soon urged in the name of the Church of England by men, undoubtedly Puritans and nonconformists, who nevertheless declared themselves members of that church. Some of them, as recent emigrants, must have been members of it under the commonwealth, and all believed that they had not forfeited the right of Christian Englishmen by removing to the English colony of Connecticut. And there was a strong disposition to redress what was evidently felt to be a wrong, though the meas-

¹ *Magnalia*, iii. 74, as quoted in Dexter's *Congregationalism as seen in its Literature*, 414-5, and note.

ures adopted were inadequate, and their inadequacy has much to do with the welcome afterwards given to the Anglican missionaries.¹

One fact more, belonging to the seventeenth century, brings into view an attractive aspect of the relations then existing between Congregationalists and the mother church, while it throws a pleasant light on the origin and primary aims of those missionary labors in the eighteenth century, of which even such tolerant Congregationalists as Thomas Ruggles finally complained as proselytism.

More than once we find the name of William Leete, still another of the seven pillars of the First Church, attached to an account of certain funds received from England for the support of Indian missions. The illustrious John Eliot derived part of his income from this source, and his son Joseph, the third pastor of Guilford and ancestor of many members of this congregation, was once, at least, thus paid for work among the Indians of Massachusetts.² Now the contributions which Governor Leete, as from time to time one of the Commissioners of the United Colonies, had a share in administering, came from a society established "for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England and the Parts Adjacent." At the head of it, for about thirty years, stood a famous Anglican layman, Robert Boyle, who, with the support of the Earl of Clarendon and others, had been its preserver and second founder. Yet it was, in fact, a Puritan society, incorporated by the Long Parliament six months after it had beheaded the king (July 27, 1649). It owed its origin largely to the interest aroused by Eliot's earlier labors, an interest which Henry Whitfield, going home in 1651 to share the Puritan triumph, helped, by his writings, to intensify. But the Christ-like longing to save the souls of the heathen of North America, which the society embodied, had already moved devout Puritans and Anglicans to work together in imparting what was to both, and must be to all Christians, "the common salvation."

After Boyle's death, his society (or "company" as it was

¹ Petition, etc., Oct. 17, 1664; first printed in *American Church Review*, April, 1857, pp. 106-7. Trumbull's *History of Connecticut*, i. 297-9, etc.

² Hasard's *State Papers*, ii. 442-3, 496.

then called) doubtless passed under the control of nonconformists, who had now secured toleration, and could administer openly their own institutions. But the missionary impulse, neither Puritan nor Anglican, but Christian, was still strong in the national church. Within ten years (1701) it took form in a new society, with one of Boyle's dearest friends, Archbishop Tenison, at its head. It adopted a name so like the old that the two have often been confounded, and borrowed, with no great change, the device on the original seal of Congregational Massachusetts. And it so manifestly perpetuated the life of the Puritan company that the continued existence of the latter seems sometimes to have been overlooked by modern nonconformists. It was, in short, the great institution which American Episcopalians know and thankfully honor as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.¹ It would be improper to describe the Anglican society as the successor of the Puritan company, but the latter was, in a real sense, the parent of the former. And the society became the main channel of that stream of Christian feeling and purpose which we can trace back through the joint labors of Anglicans like Robert Boyle, and Puritans like Richard Baxter, and the missionary zeal of fierce revolutionists at the beginning of the commonwealth, to the associated efforts of high church bishops and reforming presbyters to send the Gospel to America in the reign of Charles the First.² The vast growth of the English settlements here had made the religious wants of the settlers a more pressing burden on the consciences of Christian Englishmen than those of the Indians or the negroes, though the new society did care for all, as ultimately for non-Christian races in the East, but its primary object, as defined by its charter, was to provide "an Orthodox Clergy to live amongst" such of the king's "Loveing

¹ *Collection of Massachusetts Historical Society*, i. 211-19; Ed. of 1806; Anderson's *History of the Colonial Church*, 2d Ed., London, 1856, ii. 10-15, 188-90, 193-4, 208-9, 495-9; *Missionary World, an Encyclopedia*, etc., 84; Brown's *History of Missions*, Philadelphia, 1820, i. 65-8, and note, ii. 482, 483, 488; "Guilford and Madison in Literature, by H. P. Robinson (a descendant of Whitfield) in *Proceedings at the Celebration of the 250th Anniversary*, etc., 118.

² Bishop Lake, of Bath and Wells, acted with John White, a conforming Puritan, in promoting the settlement made at Salem in 1629; Robert Sanderson, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, approved a petition in behalf of Indian missions along with Edmund Calamy of the Presbyterian party (*Hist. of Col. Ch.* ii. 10-16, 188 et seq.).

Subjects' as might "want the Administration of God's Word and Sacraments." This was a legitimate and, indeed, indispensable enlargement of the task of the original company, and New England Congregationalists felt that missionaries were needed in almost every colony except Massachusetts and Connecticut. And in those two colonies the earliest missionaries, in spite of a zeal for Episcopacy not shared by all their successors, were warmly welcomed by some of the Congregational ministers, enjoyed their hospitality, and preached in their pulpits.¹

We find, then, that from the time when Guilford was settled to the period in which our own parochial history begins, influences had been at work favorable to kind feeling on the part of the settlers and their children towards the Church of England—in England. And of this, Mr. Ruggles's willingness to believe that he and his people were members of the national church is a striking illustration. We also find that the settlers soon wished for and asked for Christian rights, which the Church of England conceded, sometimes quite too easily, and which Congregationalism then denied. We even find that not only had the famous society which helped to reproduce in America features of Anglican Christianity least agreeable to our Puritan fathers, received into its life a strong current colored by Puritanism, but that as we ascend the stream towards its remoter sources we seem to discover a faint reflection of the thatched meeting-house on Guilford green. What we do not find is proof that the First Church was a congregation of the Church of England in the year 1744. Had it been in England its assemblies would have become unlawful in 1662; after 1689 it would have been a legalized society of dissenters, wholly separated from the establishment. The church was in New England, and whether the Act of Uniformity and the Toleration Bill were law in America or not, it is not quite reasonable to regard the Atlantic Ocean as creating an ecclesiastical union which would not have existed without it. The separation, however accomplished, was a fact, and was accepted as such by both parties. And it follows that those who saw the fact which Mr. Ruggles was disposed

¹ Keith's "Journal," in *Publications of the Protestant Episcopal Historical Society*, 1851, pp. 7, 8, 10, 26-7.

not to see, and who might have held his half-filial attitude towards the mother church, when they finally desired that as far as they were concerned the separation might be done away, were not cherishing a spirit which he should have thought schismatical. As little was this the case when they also desired to enjoy all the good things which were offered by the Church of England, and could not be obtained at his hands, even if he had been right in thinking himself one of her ministers. When they began to long for the majesty and sacred beauty of her worship, for the pastoral oversight of her historic ministry, as old as Christianity, above all, for the freedom of approach to the ordinances of Christ, which, however sadly abused in England, was, nevertheless, their right as far as they tried to keep their baptismal covenant—when they longed for these things, and he could promise none of them, he could not wonder if they sought them elsewhere. Why they desired them and how they found them, remains to be told.

Not far from the year 1707, and during the pastorate of the elder Thomas Ruggles, an Englishman named Samuel Smithson came to Guilford. By the will of his kinsman, Thomas Macock, he became, in that year the possessor of a farm lying just beyond West river, and extending towards the sea at Mulberry Point. Though a member of the Church of England, he doubtless fell in with the religious usages of his neighbors, and when he died, in 1718, he was, I suppose, the collector of the minister's rate for the First Society.¹ His two daughters, Hannah and Dorothy, married the Congregational pastors of Killingworth (Clinton) and North Guilford, Jared Eliot and Samuel Russell, though descendants of the former, are now communicants in this parish. But Samuel Smithson brought to Guilford a love for those good things with which the Church of England enriches her children, and he was able so to transmit it that it has borne fruit, here and elsewhere, a thousand-fold. One of the sixteen volumes (besides his Bible) which formed his library was a Prayer Book. That he lent about two years before he died (1716) to a young man of nineteen or twenty,

¹ *New Haven Probate Records*, iii. 108-12; *Guilford Book of Terrymers*, etc., from 1648, pp. 3, 57; *Guilford Land Records*, i. 105-6; *Records of Votes and Acts of the West Society*, Lib. I., A.

named Samuel Johnson. He was the son of a deacon of the First Church, and grandson of another, and a recent graduate of the Collegiate School at Saybrook.¹ Previous reading had prepared young Johnson to enjoy the Prayer Book, and later studies, prolonged for years, were needed to convince him, after entering the Congregational ministry, that he must seek for valid orders in the Church of England. And, partly in virtue of personal temperament, partly through reading which he pursued after his earliest study of the Prayer Book, he attained a type of piety distinctly unlike that of the good men around him, or even of most of his contemporaries in England. It was more filial and joyous than theirs; it was more sympathetic and charged with a larger hope, because resting on a truer, clearer vision of God than that of the older Puritans. In many respects it nearly reproduced the inner life of the Anglican saints of the seventeenth century. Samuel Johnson's personal character, I believe, did more than the labors of other men to promote the growth of the Church of England in this commonwealth, and did more than his talents and learning to make him what the first President Dwight called him, "the father of Episcopacy in Connecticut." And it was such a character as the Book of Common Prayer, intelligently and devoutly used, is better fitted than most human compositions to produce. When that book was placed in his hands, probably the strongest force in his spiritual history was put in action. And we may look back to the good deed of Samuel Smithson, performed more than a quarter of a century before our parish was founded, as its true beginning, and to Mr. Smithson himself, though he had then long been in his grave, as in a real sense its founder.

It was at least seven years, or in the autumn of 1723, before Mr. Johnson came to his father's house in Guilford as a presbyter of the Church of England. He was on his way to the one mission which the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel had thus far established in Connecticut. It had been undertaken chiefly for the benefit of recent emigrants at Stratford, who were already Episcopalians. The Society, therefore,

¹ *New Haven Probate Records*, iv. 540-1; v. 14-15; *Talcott's Guilford Genealogy* (MS.); *Samuel Johnson's Autobiography* (MS.); *Beardsley's Life and Correspondence of Samuel Johnson*, 12.

which had now been in operation more than twenty years, was not making very strenuous efforts to convert Congregationalists, neither, so far as it appears, was Samuel Johnson. He said long afterwards, "I never once tried to proselyte dissenters, nor do I believe any of the other ministers did."¹

The Society was not indifferent to the performance of the task which its missionary seemed to disclaim, for that was the reconciliation of separated brethren, the healing of a schism which in England had but lately become complete (1689). It instructed its representatives in America that their duty towards "Parishioners" opposed to or dissenting from the Church of England was to seek "to convince and reclaim them with a spirit of meekness and gentleness." Its first missionary (1702-4), George Keith, a converted Quaker, not eminent for "meekness and gentleness," though a good man, was prompt in suggesting measures which he believed "would effectually contribute to the proselyting the main body of the Dissenting People, to their Ancient Mother, the Church," towards which he found many of them, even in New England, cherishing a filial spirit.² Keith's mission was primarily one of investigation, and his reports determined the choice of positions to be occupied. That the Society, nevertheless, as informed by him, regarded other parts of America as more in need of its help than the two Congregational colonies, everywhere furnished with ministers and meeting-houses, appears from the fact that in 1728 it had but two missionaries in Connecticut, and, apparently, but three in Massachusetts.³ It was the strong and persistent pressure on the part of the colonists themselves which led the Society to establish its New England missions, and it was never able fully to meet the demand. The eagerness of young men to "go home for orders" from Connecticut, had to be checked, and the sincerity and extent of the popular desire was thoroughly tested by throwing on the people not only the expense, no trifling matter, of sending the young men "home," and of building churches, but also of paying part of the stipend,

¹ Beardsley's *History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut*, i. 196.

² Anderson's *Hist. of Col. Ch.*, iii. 66-7, 229; *Collect. P. E. Hist. Soc.*, 1851, pp. ix., xviii., 26-7 etc.

³ Humphreys, "History of the Propagation Society," in *Ch. Rev.* (vols. iv., v.), Jan., 1852, p. 614; Jan. 1853, pp. 621-32.

with the serious additional cost of providing a house and a glebe.¹ Samuel Johnson, then, was acting in the spirit of his instructions, as interpreted by the attitude of the Society (more distinctly cautious as the century advanced), when he contented himself with aiding those who sought information or advice, and vigorously defending his church against attacks, made with growing bitterness. That the Church of England steadily increased in this commonwealth was due far less to "aggressive work" on the part of the Anglican clergy than to the fact that the Anglican church supplied what Puritanism had taught men to value as their lives, and New England Congregationalism, with an honorable, though misguided zeal for the holiness of God's House, had placed almost out of their reach. Their "Ancient Mother" entered New England in response to the cry of her wandering children, and the Venerable Society, upon the whole, simply pursued the course defined by its title, in laboring to propagate the Gospel by the method prescribed in its charter, of providing for the wants of English subjects with "The Administration of God's Word and Sacraments." The history of the parish at Guilford, the home of Johnson's family, whom he often visited, and likely, one would have thought, soon to furnish material for a conforming congregation which the Society would carefully watch over and sustain, is a striking illustration of all this.

The earliest proof of any leaning towards conformity here which I have found, appears nearly four years after Johnson's return from England. His father, Deacon Samuel Johnson, died in 1727 (May 8), and the son writes that he "would have communicated with us if he had lived." But the missionary adds that his father did not "think it necessary to leave the Dissenting communion," although he had already renounced its theology.² The statement shows, it may be observed, that Mr. Johnson followed the Catholic usage of the mother church, never departed from, I suppose, in this parish, of recognizing the right to the Holy Communion conferred in baptism, and pre-

¹ Humphreys, in *Ch. Rev.*, Oct., 1851, p. 457; *Abstract of Proceedings of S. P. G.*, 1763, 1773; *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 96, 216, 233-4, 237, 269; ii. 103; Beardsley, *Hist. of P. E. Ch. in Conn.*, i. 103.

² Beardsley's *Life and Correspondence of Samuel Johnson*, 59.

served by a godly life, and that he acknowledged as valid the baptism of his Congregational brethren. This is the more noteworthy because he himself, after communicating at King's Chapel, Boston, in virtue of his own baptism at the hands, presumably, of Thomas Ruggles the elder, satisfied his personal scruples by receiving hypothetical baptism in London.¹ Several months after Deacon Johnson's death, his younger son, Nathaniel, then twenty-two years old, was appointed a rate-collector in the First Society, being, evidently, still a Congregationalist.² It may be that within three years, or in 1730, he and one or two others declared their conformity, but I have found no contemporary evidence to that effect.³ In the mean time the Church of England was slowly growing in Fairfield county, where Samuel Johnson's parish lay, and in New London county, where there were English Episcopalians of note, and by the year 1736 six clergymen, all born in New England, though one resided just west of the border, were caring for missions within those limits, as well as for scattered families elsewhere.⁴ In 1736 the first missionary was settled in New Haven county, in the person of Jonathan Arnold, formerly pastor at West Haven, as Johnson had been before him. He lived in that village, but he practically took the county for his missionary district, while he often went beyond it.⁵ And in May, 1738, the name of Nathaniel Johnson, with two others afterwards found in our parish records, appears in a list of seventy-three adult male members of the Church of England under Mr. Arnold's care.⁶ It is at least highly probable that all the three were at that date residents of Guilford, and that, in the families of Nathaniel Johnson, Thomas Walstone and David Naughty, we have the nucleus of this congregation. It is also probable that the second of these families conformed in Branford as early as 1728, and lived there fully two years longer.⁷ Pos-

¹ *Life and Correspondence*, 23, 34.

² *Record of Votes and Acts*, etc. (Dec. 19, 1727).

³ *Church Review*, April, 1848, p. 15.

⁴ Beardsley, *Hist. of P. E. Ch. in Conn.*, i. 92, 100-101.

⁵ *Ibid.*, i. 111-2; *Letters in possession of S. P. G.*, Vol. A. 26 (189). Copies of letters relating to this region were made in 1893 for the Rev. Dr. Harwood of New Haven.

⁶ *Ch. Rev.* April, 1857, p. 113. One of the names is Waughty, almost certainly a misprint.

⁷ *Registry Book* (Christ Ch., Stratford), 6, 8. There was a Nathanael Johnson of Branford, but he can hardly have declared himself in 1730. Bailey's *Trinity Church, Branford*, 6, 8, 11.

sibly Samuel Johnson received in 1730 declarations of conformity from his brother and Mr. Naughty, either at Guilford or at Branford, where he baptized two members of the Walstone family on the twentieth of October. This might account for the statement to which I have alluded, that there were conformists here in that year. Be this as it may, it is in 1738 that the first indications known to me of the existence of anything like a company of Episcopalians in Guilford appear in early records. And it was six years longer before a parish was organized. There may have been more than one cause for this slow rate of progress, in virtue of which at least eighteen parishes in Connecticut were organized earlier than ours. It seems to me not impossible that Samuel Johnson's own influence with his friends in Guilford was thrown against haste on their part. For we know that during some portion of the period before 1740 he cherished strong hopes of a general adhesion to the Church of England, if entire conformity were not demanded. In 1732 he had submitted to the Bishop of London certain proposals looking towards a "comprehension" of the colonists under episcopal government, but without imposing "all the ceremonies and constitutions of our Church." Such proposals he had been asked by several of his Congregational friends to draw up, and there can be little doubt that he would have been ready to unite with them and other Christians on the broad basis laid down by our Bishops a century and a half later, of the Scriptures, the Creed, the two Sacraments and the Historic Episcopate. It is, moreover, a very reasonable conjecture that Thomas Ruggles of Guilford was one of the "several ingenious men among the dissenters" who seemed to have thought a comprehension possible. In the following year (1733) when, after a long and bitter struggle, the now extinct Fourth Church had practically achieved its independence, the First Society protested against a recent attempt of the legislature to impose the decision of a council convoked by itself upon the church, and appealed to the opinion of a high authority in England that the calling of synods by the colonial assemblies was "a breach of the royal prerogative." Towards the end of the same year (Dec. 10, 1733,) Mr. Johnson wrote to the Bishop of London on the same subject at the request of some "dissenting minis-

ters."¹ It is almost impossible to doubt that Mr. Ruggles, who must have known Johnson, about eight years his senior, from childhood, was one of these ministers, and very easy to believe that the two had previously discussed the question of comprehension. And if Thomas Ruggles, who long afterwards declared his people members of the Church of England by inheritance, was at this period thinking kindly of a possible recognition of him and them on the generous terms suggested by Samuel Johnson, we can well believe that the latter would not have been eager to promote a second separation from his Congregational brother's flock.

But a deeper and more powerful influence than the senior missionary's fair dream of comprehension kept in check the impulse towards conformity in his native town. Long before the close of the seventeenth century, under the famous "Halfway Covenant," the sacraments had been made more accessible. Those who "owned the covenant," that is, formally acknowledged the obligations imposed in baptism, might then bring their children to be baptized, or even obtain baptism for themselves if necessary. In Massachusetts, though never, I think, in Connecticut, it became common to allow such persons, while supposed to be still unconverted, to receive the communion. The mistake of using improper tests of conversion was sought to be remedied by treating conversion itself as not essential in the visible church.² The Halfway Covenant was a wrong method of righting a wrong. Nevertheless, it went far towards silencing complaint, and keeping Congregationalists within the Puritan fold. It did not wholly remove the grievance, and in Connecticut it came into use rather slowly, so that the early missionaries were met at once with requests for one or both sacraments.³ But the religious life of the eighteenth century was everywhere comparatively feeble on the side of the affections, and it is evident that the desire for the highest Chris-

¹ *Conn. Ch. Docs.* i. 151-4, 155-6; MS. of Hon. Ralph D. Smith, relating chiefly to the Fourth Church.

² Mather's *Magn.*, ii. 277-315; Stoddard's *Appeal to the Learned*; Trumbull's *Hist. of Conn.*, i. 297, 312, 471-2; ii. 19, 143; *Contribut. to Eccles. Hist. of Conn.*, 411; Palfrey's *Hist. of New England*, ii. 487-94; Dutton's *Hist. of North Ch., New Haven*, 10, 11-13, 126-7; etc., etc.

³ Trumbull, *Hist. of Conn.*, i. 477; *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 10, 11, 17, 19, 23, 39, 253; ii. 8, 29, 31, 55, 134, 169.

tian privilege, that of admission to the Lord's Supper, was not strong. It was indeed still regarded as much more than a privilege, and in 1732 forty-six persons in Guilford, who had preaching but not the sacraments, complained that their souls were suffering because "the spiritual food thereof was denied them."¹ But during sixteen years after that date the number of communicants in the First Church slightly decreased. It apparently continued to decrease for half a century longer,² although most of the adult members of that congregation had probably "owned the covenant," therein pledging themselves to "endeavor to observe all" the laws of God's kingdom (which certainly included the use of the second sacrament), "so far," in the words of the formula, "as he hitherto hath or hereafter shall discover your duty to you."³

In many communities the great revival of 1740, which, for the time, intensified religious emotions, and which ultimately brought new power into American Christianity, made the relation of experiences easy for multitudes, and these flocked into the Congregational churches. It was, however, attended by gross excesses, and by a narrowness and censoriousness which some of its warm friends confessed and deplored. In this way it promoted the growth of the Church of England, in which large numbers of conservative Christians sought a less heated atmosphere. But in Guilford the influence of Mr. Ruggles was conscientiously thrown against the revivalists, as was that of Samuel Smithson's son-in-law, Samuel Russell, in North Guilford.⁴ With regard to opposition to a revival like that of 1740, on the part of good men, it is worth while to quote the words of the late Dr. Charles Hodge, a very eminent Presbyterian: "It is well that there are such opposers, else the church would soon be over-run with fanaticism."⁵ Mr. Ruggles seems to have been successful in his opposition, as far as his own church was concerned, and he doubtless thereby kept the allegiance of many who might have become conformists. In the Fourth Society, occu-

¹ *Smith MS.*

² *Ibid.*; *Manual of First Congregational Church.*

³ "Form of owning the Baptismal Covenant," in the handwriting of Rev. Aaron Dutton, but without date. Kindly copied for me by Mr. Wallace D. Norton.

⁴ *Declaration of the Association of the County of New Haven, etc.* (1745).

⁵ *History of the Presbyterian Church*, Pt. II., 12, Phil., 1851.

pying the same territory with the First, owning the covenant was apparently not practiced until 1750, nor continued after 1771.¹ In 1743, a year before our organization, James Sproat, an able man, and a warm friend of the revival, became pastor, and retained that position for twenty-five years.² Some members of his congregation were early supporters of this parish, and it is not impossible that it was Mr. Sproat's zeal for the methods of the revivalists which gave the final impulse to the cause of conformity.

On the whole, the spirit of eighteenth century piety, real, but not very emotional, was strong in Guilford. Towards the close of the century, when the Fourth Church had just dismissed its last pastor and begun to decay (1789), the excellent pioneer of New England Methodism, Jesse Lee, reported "some lively Christians" here "of the Baptist persuasion," as if the Guilford Congregationalists did not conform to his standard of liveliness, which is more than probable.³ The Church of England was, therefore, less in request than it often was elsewhere as a "haven of refuge;" it attracted the most earnest of the class excluded by contemporary Congregationalism from the Holy Table, with such as might become convinced that not Congregationalism but Episcopacy is the kind of church government "exactly described in the Word of God."⁴ Accessions on both grounds were to be looked for from among the friends and kindred of Samuel Johnson. And it is a pleasant thought that the wish to receive the communion, as a duty and a right, was one of the chief forces which produced this parish. It is to be observed, moreover, that the denial, in some places, of the first sacrament, and of the second everywhere, to those from whom the Church of England, even when controlled by Puritans, had never withheld them, abundantly justified the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in planting missions in this Christian commonwealth. For within its borders were great numbers of the King's "loveing subjects," suffering that want of "the Administration of God's Sacraments" which the society's charter required it to supply.

¹ *Smith MS.*

² *Smith, History of Guilford*, 100-102; *Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit*, iii. 125-9.

³ *Stevens, History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, ii. 428.

⁴ See "Cambridge Platform," Chap. I., 3.

Jonathan Arnold, as in a loose sense, the first missionary for New Haven county, may be regarded as the first appointed for Guilford, which it is nearly certain that he visited as early as the spring of 1738. In 1740 he was succeeded in his mission by Theophilus Morris, an Englishman who also lived at West Haven.¹ It was not as easy then as now, when far more frequent intercourse with the world tends to make everybody less provincial, for men of foreign birth and training to adapt themselves to the ways of Connecticut people. Mr. Morris had difficulties for which his personal qualities, rather than his English nativity, were responsible,² but he did some good work in his mission. I find no record of visits made by him at Guilford, but as he had the oversight of the Wallingford conformists he probably came here.³ In 1743 what we may call the New Haven county mission passed into the care of the clergyman under whose guidance the parish was organized, the Rev. James Lyons, a native of Ireland, who resided at Derby. Once more the missionary's foreign birth was a disadvantage to him, and he suffered from it in ways far more discreditable to others than to himself. But, although he was diligent and useful, he had an infirmity of temper which long afterwards exposed him to severe and just censure.⁴

Mr. Lyons visited Guilford presumably in 1743, and certainly made several visits before the parish was organized, preaching and administering baptism. About four months before the organization (May 8, 1744,) Dr. Johnson (as he had now become) preached a week-day sermon here, the manuscript of which is, by the kindness of his descendants, in my possession. It is extremely interesting to students of the history of theology, as showing that Johnson had departed from the ordinary Protestant view of the great doctrine of justification, and had accepted the teaching of a famous Anglican divine, Bishop Bull. That teaching might tempt men to overrate the value of their own obedience, but it required nobody to be self-righteous, and might, on the other hand, guard some against the tempta-

¹ *Digest of Records of S. P. G.*, 1701-1892; Beardsley, *Hist. of Ch. in Conn.*, i. 115-7.

² *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 198-202; Beardsley, *Hist. etc.*, i. 135-6.

³ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 138-9 (misplaced), 176, 202.

⁴ *Digest of Rec. of S. P. G.*, 853; *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 102, 208-10; ii. 51, 67, 126-7; *Christ Church Records*.

tion to which the revivalists were greatly exposed, of attaching too little importance to personal holiness. But the sermon, as far as it influenced their religious thinking, would have helped to remove the early Episcopalians of Guilford farther from the sympathy of many of their fellow Christians.

On the day on which this sermon was preached, Mr. Lyons wrote from Derby to the secretary of the Venerable Society to the effect that eight families in Guilford, embracing thirty-six children, had subscribed a paper declaring their conformity.¹ If we knew when this paper was signed we should have the date of what was perhaps the first step towards organization. And if we knew who signed it we should have the names of those who effected the organization. Now a letter to the Society in England from the churchwardens at Wallingford, dated December 1, 1743, being written "on behalf" also of "brethren inhabiting in the neighboring towns of Guilford and Branford,"² makes it probable that there had already been some sort of joint action here, and possibly the declaration of conformity was made towards the close of 1743. And it so happens that we get from our own records and otherwise, the names of exactly eight men, heads of families, who had in various ways indicated their disposition to accept the ministrations of the Church of England before May, 1744. It is not certain that all these men lived in Guilford, still less that all lived in this part of the township, but it is a fair inference from what we do know that the majority were present at the so-called "vestry" at which the first churchwardens and clerk were appointed. Five of these names have been mentioned already, those of the three officials, Nathaniel Johnson, William Ward, and Samuel Collins, and those of Thomas Walstone and David Naughty, in whose households at Branford and Guilford baptism had been administered. The three remaining names are those of Caleb Wetmore, Abijah Watrous (or Waterhouse) and Hezekiah Bishop, all parents of children baptized in Guilford.³

You would, of course, like to know something of those who bore a part in founding the parish, or in carrying it through

¹ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 208.

² *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 202.

³ *Christ Ch. Rec.; Registry Book*, Stratford.

the hard struggles of its first half century. It is impossible, in some cases for want of material, in others for want of time, to give information full enough to be interesting or valuable. I feel bound, however, to tell as much of what I have been able to learn about the founders as my limits will permit.

Nathaniel Johnson, brother of the distinguished clergyman of whom I have spoken so often, was an important member, not only of the parish, but of the community. In becoming an Episcopalian he probably gave offence to many of his townsmen, but it is creditable to him and to them that he evidently retained their confidence and respect. Within about eight years he was commissioned first lieutenant, and then captain, of the local military company. And he seems to have marched at the head of it when Connecticut, having already furnished fourteen hundred men, sent out five thousand more after the disaster at Fort William Henry in 1757.¹ He was connected somewhat closely by blood or marriage with at least eight families apparently belonging to this congregation in the last century. His first wife, Margery Morgan, the mother of his children, was a descendant of Governor Eaton, and had near relatives who must have been the principal supporters of the congregation afterwards formed in Killingworth. His second wife, Diana, the daughter of Captain Andrew Ward, and widow of Daniel Hubbard, was the mother of Rev. Dr. Bela Hubbard, of whom I must speak later. Captain Johnson's son, Samuel, married the daughter of Samuel Collins, and their descendant, Samuel Collins Johnson, is still remembered with honor in the parish and the town.² Descendants of other names are with us, one being our junior warden.

Of others I must speak more briefly. William Ward was the son of William Ward of Wallingford, and nephew of Andrew Ward of Guilford. His appointment as second warden, and the fact that the parish was organized in his house, mark him as a valuable member of the little company. He has, I believe, descendants of the name living elsewhere. Samuel Collins, a descendant, through his mother, of Governor Leete,

¹ *Connecticut Colonial Records*, ix. 420; x. 128; Trumbull, *Hist. of Conn.*, ii. 382; *Guilford Celebration*, 183. (Paper of Bernard C. Steiner, Ph. D.)

² Talcott's *Guilford Genealogy* (MS.), etc.

had been a collector of rates in the First Society, and in the discharge of his official duty had been required to enforce payment thirteen years before on the separatists from that Society, who established the Fourth.¹ I think that none of his posterity now reside here. Among those found in other places is at least one clergyman, also descended from Nathaniel Johnson.² Thomas Walstone must have removed from Branford to Guilford before 1747.³ He interests us as the earliest of the Guilford conformists, as far as yet appears from the records. He is now represented among our communicants. David Naughty's name survives in various traditions, and his house seems to have stood nearly where this church now stands. The first baptisms known to have been performed here were those of two of his servants (1739). He had been one of the founders of the Fourth Society, and in his old age he apparently became an attendant at the First Church.⁴ Of Caleb Wetmore, as of Hezekiah Bishop, I have not searched the town records far enough to secure other information. Abijah Watrous (the name appears in several forms, being long a prominent one) was the son-in-law of William Ward. These frequent relationships among members of the congregation show how the parish extended itself along family lines.

The fourth of September, old style, was a Tuesday, and Mr. Lyons may have come hither from Wallingford, after having officiated there on Sunday. If so, and observing that William Ward's father, of the same name, was then living in Wallingford, we see why Mr. Lyons, in the memorandum presumably made by him, (accessible to you all in a facsimile,) first wrote, "at the house of William Ward in Wallingford," afterwards erasing the last word and substituting "Gilford." This house, the birthplace of the parish, stood very near the present residence of Miss Annette Fowler, in Whitfield street, facing the Green, near the northwest corner. It was on the home lot of Edward Benton, an early settler who has many descendants in our parish. Immediately west was the home lot of

¹ *Smith MS.*

² The Rev. Samuel Johnson French, late rector at Sayre, Penn.

³ *Christ Ch. Records.*

⁴ *Smith MS.; Record of the Votes, etc.*

John Hoadly, on which, doubtless, were born, a century before, (1643 and 1650) the brothers, Samuel and John Hoadly, who both died clergymen of the Church of England, and the elder of whom became the father of Benjamin Hoadly, who died Bishop of Winchester, and John Hoadly, who died Archbishop of Armagh.¹ Next west was the home lot which passed, in 1648, into the hands of George Hubbard, whose descendants, members of this congregation, still live on it, and on which Bela Hubbard, so long revered by Episcopalians here and in New Haven, was born a few years before the organization (1739). The first owner of this home lot was Jacob Sheaffe, grandson of William Wilson, canon of Windsor, who married the niece of Edmund Grindal, Archbishop of Canterbury.² One of his sisters, the wife of William Chittenden (another being the wife of Henry Whitfield), lived in the next house to the west. A neighborhood having so many associations with the Church of England and episcopacy was a very proper one for the nativity of a congregation which not only claimed to be a part of the Church of England, but accepted episcopal government.

In the record of this first parish meeting, the wardens and clerk are said to have been "appointed," as also in 1746, Mr. Lyons being again present as "Minister." Later, the word "chosen" is used. The English canons gave the minister the appointment of one warden and of the clerk, (who then led, or made, the responses, and led the singing). What powers Mr. Lyons exercised in this case may, perhaps, be inferred from the fact that within a year he personally appointed the wardens at Middletown.³ There were at first no vestrymen, and none are mentioned until 1750. The resolution now adopted to hold service "by themselves" implied lay reading, since they would not often expect the presence of a clergyman. And by means of lay reading chiefly, or largely, worship and religious instruction were maintained in this parish for almost a century, or until

¹ Letter of Charles J. Hoadley, L. L. D.; sketch prefixed to *Works of Bishop Benjamin Hoadly*.

² Sprague, *Annals*, etc., i. 12-13; Capt. C. H. Townshend, in *New Haven Journal and Courier*, June 26 and July 15, 1884.

³ *Lett. of S. P. G.* (Harwood MS.), vol. B. 13. (136), quoted by Dr. Harwood in his "Historical Address," Sunday, Dec. 30, 1894; compare *Conn. Ch. Socs.* i. 41, 161, 296. The wardens of 1768 describe the action of 1744 as "the choice of Churchwardens and appointment of a Clerk." *Ibid.*, ii. 127.

your late honored rector, Dr. Bennett, began his earlier ministry in 1834, and the parish, for the first time, had the exclusive use of its clergyman's services. The traditions of the congregation affirm that the church, when built, was never closed on Sunday, and it is known that weekly worship and the observance of Holy Days were maintained from the time of organization with scarcely an interruption, for many years, through the zeal and fidelity of laymen.¹

It is convenient to divide the history of the parish, as organized, into five periods. The first period, of about six years, extending from 1744 to 1750, was one in which the administration of the parish was, properly speaking, in the hands of laymen. Mr. Lyons rendered most important services, and was, not unnaturally, regarded by the people as their "Minister." But it appears that Guilford was not named in his commission from the Venerable Society, and that he had not the rights of a settled minister before the law. Technically the parish was vacant until 1750, as it often was practically long afterwards. Mr. Lyons came to Guilford three or four times before the close of the year 1746, when he probably removed to Long Island, and he made one visit later.² Dr. Johnson visited the parish at intervals of a few months, apparently, and he was not the only clerical visitor. But apart from this, worship must have been conducted by members of the congregation. Among the first lay-readers, as he is one of the most interesting of the pioneers of episcopacy in Guilford, was, presumably, Mr. Edmund Ward. As he was "appointed" churchwarden along with Mr. Samuel Collins in April, 1746, he may be supposed to have joined the parish as early as 1745, and he was, not improbably, one of its founders. He was the son of Captain Andrew Ward, graduated at Yale College in 1727 (his name standing third in a class of ten, as indicative of his social position), and was ordained as first pastor of the Fourth Church, September 21, 1733, after having preached to the congregation for two or three years. His pastorate seems to have lasted but little more than a year, and in 1735 he ceased to be a minister. The causes,

¹ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 126.

² *Christ Ch. Rec.; Lett. of S. P. G.* (Harwood MS) vol. B. 13 (136); *Conn. Ch. Docs.* i. 237, ii. 127; *Dig. of S. P. G. Rec.* 848, 853.

though not fully stated, were such as would doubtless have prevented him for applying for orders in the Church of England, had he wished at a later date to do so. They did not destroy his usefulness as a citizen, and in after years he more than once served as a selectman, and represented the town several times in the Legislature.¹ Still less could they permanently exclude him from the privileges of the church, though ten years had passed since the events which led to his removal from the ministry before he is known to have appeared as conformist. Thenceforth he evidently was, and deserved to be, honored and trusted in this parish.

But while he and others were well qualified to act as lay-readers, it had long been customary in Connecticut to employ young men who were preparing to take orders, or had serious thoughts of doing so.² And at length, perhaps in 1748, such a reader was found for Guilford in the person of "Mr. Samuel Johnson."³ This I take to have been the elder son of the Rev. Dr. Johnson, William Samuel, who hesitated between divinity and law, and who for several years acted as a lay-reader elsewhere. His task may be assumed to have included those of catechist and of a kind of lay-pastor, and he spent six months in the service of the parish.⁴ He became one of the most useful, as he was nearly or quite the most accomplished, of early American statesmen, and it interests us to think of such a man as probably fulfilling a lay-ministry in this congregation during the first period of its history. His brother William, who did take orders, but died in England in 1756, also read service here occasionally.⁵ But the young man who acted longest in this capacity was Peter Beers. He, as the wardens write in 1768, "continued with us better than twelve months, to our great satisfaction."⁶ This gentleman was probably a youthful parishioner of Dr. Johnson's, resident in what is now the town of Trumbull, though I have not been able to find proof of his hav-

¹ *Smith MS.; Town Records; Hist. of Guilford*, 100, 169.

² *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 148.

³ *Ibid.*, ii. 127.

⁴ *Beardsley's Life and Times of William Samuel Johnson*, 4-6.

⁵ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 252.

⁶ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 127.

ing been either a student or a candidate for orders.¹ He must have officiated at Guilford not far from 1750.

During this period the parish was making progress. Mr. Lyons wrote to the Society, under date of May 30, 1745: "The Church at Gilford . . . increases. I administer the sacraments there, and they read Prayers and Sermons."² Early in 1749 Dr. Johnson reports eighteen families of conformists at Guilford,³ and our records contain the names of fourteen new householders, as I suppose, in addition to the eight already mentioned. But only twelve names appear in a list of rate-payers preserved among our documents, and dated 1750. This is the surest indication of the strength of the congregation at the close of the first period. A new parish was struggling into life in North Guilford, under the leadership of Dr. Johnson's brother-in-law, Deacon George Bartlett, and it is more than probable that Dr. Johnson included its members in his enumeration. Some of the names recorded in connection with Guilford certainly belonged to Branford.⁴ The new family names which may be reasonably claimed for this parish are, in the order of occurrence, those of Kimberly, Fraser, Judge, Norton, Pierson, Dowd, Welch and Chittenden. Some names may be those of parents who sought baptism for their children only because they could not obtain it in their own congregations. The Fourth Church did not formally grant this privilege to non-communicants until 1750, and in 1746 seven children of Thomas Norton, son of one of the founders of that church, and a graduate of Yale, were baptized by Dr. Johnson,⁵ the eldest being fourteen years old.⁶ In this case, as in many others, the desire to secure the Christian rights of childhood probably led to full conformity, as Mr. Norton's descendants are still represented in our congregation. Among the other new names I can speak particularly only of those of Ebenezer Chittenden and his son Ebenezer. The former was a brother-in-law of the two John-

1 Letters from Profs. H. A. Beers and F. B. Dexter, Rev. N. E. Cornwall, Messrs. D. G., J. B. and LeGrand G. Beers, and Mr. M. D. Mallett.

2 *Lett. of S. P. G.* (Harwood MS.), vol. B. 13. (136.)

3 *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 251.

4 Those, for example, of Micha Palmer, Ebenezer Linsley and John Factor, entered in the register at Stratford.

5 *Registry Book*, Christ Ch., Stratford.

6 Talcott's *Guilford Genealogy*.

sons, and his conformity is probably another illustration of the influence of that family. The son who bore his name removed to New Haven, where he became a warden of Trinity Church, and his inventive genius brought him into association with the famous Eli Whitney.¹ Another son, Thomas, was for about twenty years governor of Vermont, and in that capacity he narrowly missed being invited to consecrate a bishop in the person of the Rev. Samuel Peters, author of an astonishing "History of Connecticut," and inventor of the "Blue Laws."² Another son was Bethuel, a very useful clergyman of Vermont, who strenuously and openly opposed the election of Dr. Peters to the episcopate.³ The family lived in East Guilford (now Madison), but the sons must have been, in their boyhood, members of this congregation.

The great achievement of the first period was the erection of a church, though it was not quite finished so early, and was not entirely furnished until many years later. The first recorded action on the part of the parish is the decision to build the church by subscription, and the appointment of a committee, the record being followed by the original subscription-list, which contains but six names. The date as given is January 2, 1746, which, according to the legal usage at that time, corresponds to the second (or, more exactly, the thirteenth) of January, 1747.⁴ The next step recorded was not taken by the parish but by the meeting of proprietors, or owners of undivided lands, including the Green. That body voted, April 13,⁵ 1747, "upon petition of Messrs. Samuel Collens, Nathaniel Johnson and Edmund Ward," that they might build a church on the Green, "on the knowl before Mr. Naughty's House, nearest to the Middle Path."⁶ The petitioners named formed the committee appointed by the parish to "carry on" the work, and this was

1 Talcott's *Chillenden Family*; *New Haven Colony Historical Society Papers*, i. 60, 73.

2 *Documentary History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Vermont*, 43.

3 *Ibid.* 21, 43.

4 Until after September 2, 1752, the year began on the 25th of March, in the British dominions, while all dates were eleven days earlier (for the eighteenth century) than in most European countries. But it had long been common to use a double date for the year (as 174 5-6), and sometimes new style was followed without notice, a very perplexing circumstance to modern readers.

5 Old style, which I generally follow as to the day of the month.

6 *Proprietors' Records*, vol. D.; p. 131. Since the address was delivered, it has been found necessary to correct the dates at this point.

the first meeting held by the Proprietors since their appointment. There appears to have been no reluctance on the part of the Proprietors to grant such a privilege to Episcopalians, and there was certainly no strong disposition to crush the movement towards conformity.

The first subscriptions amounted to £270, four of the subscribers pledging each £50. The names are those of John Collins, Ebenezer Bishop, Samuel Collins, Nathaniel Johnson, Edmund Ward, and William Ward. John Collins, who has not been named before, was, I suppose, the brother of Samuel, and one of the original members of the Fourth Church. He was at this time residing in North Guilford.¹ Ebenezer Bishop was the son of Nathaniel Bishop, and married Meheta-bel, the daughter of Joseph Chittenden. He, also, became a resident of North Guilford.² Most of these subscribers paid more than they promised, besides afterwards enlarging their subscriptions. Many others contributed as the work went forward, including some who may not have become Episcopalians, and more who were non-residents. A generous Killingworth contributor was Mr. Benjamin Gale, doubtless the son-in-law of the Rev. Jared Eliot, and later well known both as a physician and as a student of prophecy. Nathaniel Johnson rode to Newport on Captain Stone's horse, probably armed with a letter from his Stratford brother to the Rev. Mr. Honeyman, then near the close of his useful rectorship of almost half a century at Trinity Church, and Newport gave £113 out of about £200 obtained elsewhere than in Guilford. It is said that nearly a thousand pounds were expended at this period, without fully completing the church,³ and of this amount between seven and eight hundred pounds must have been raised at home, chiefly within, perhaps, a dozen families. It must, however, be remembered that the sum is reckoned not in pounds sterling, but in the greatly depreciated paper of the colony, which may then have been worth one-fifth of its face value.⁴ Speaking

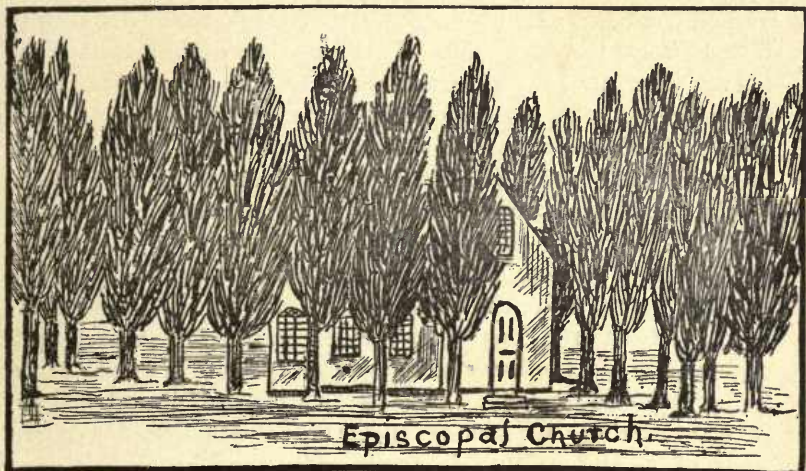
¹ *Rec. of Christ Ch.*; Talcott's *Guilford Genealogy*; *Manual of First Church*, p. 19; *Smith MS.*

² *Guilf. Geneal.*; Talcott's *Chittenden Family*, p. 26; *Christ Ch. Rec.*

³ £984 18s 6d. *Smith MS.*

⁴ Bronson's "Connecticut Currency," pp. 24, 52, 65, 74; in *New Haven Colony Historical Society Papers*, vol. i.

loosely, we may say that the parish and its friends in Guilford gave upwards of seven hundred dollars, in the course of three or four years, towards so far building the church that it could be occupied by people who cared less about their comfort than we do. But this sum was in reality a very much larger one than it seems at first sight. When the price of ordinary labor was less than fifty cents a day, and one poor man gave the equivalent of three dollars, or more than the value of a week's work, we can feel that the founders of the parish, some of whom, doubtless, gave much more largely in proportion to their ability,



FROM A SKETCH MADE IN 1830 BY ANGELINE CLARK BASSETT (NOW MRS. DANIEL M. PRENTICE), THEN TEN YEARS OLD.

were capable of making sacrifices for their religious convictions. The early Episcopalians of Connecticut were sometimes accused of conforming because, by the help of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, they could get their ministers for nothing. In fact, the law compelled them to pay their ministers' rates exactly as before, and if the missionaries, making a shift to live on stipends generally smaller than those of the Congregational pastors, frequently chose, as they did, to apply the rates to the building of churches, the payment of lay-readers and the like, this only shows that ministers and people could both make sacrifices. And in Guilford, the help received from the Society,

though of real value, was far less than was received elsewhere. It never became a distinct mission, and the chief burden always rested on its own people. Of course, I cannot answer for all the motives of all the early members of this church, but I am certain that, for the most part, they were such as their descendants and representatives have no cause to be ashamed of.

The church was of wood, in dimensions thirty-two feet by forty,¹ though the accounts vary a little. It stood east of the middle of the Green, facing west, nearly in front of this church, on the rising ground, which was then somewhat higher than now. Its Anglican character was faintly indicated by the arched windows, and by the semi-circular chancel which projected from the east end. There was no pulpit for nearly twenty years after it was occupied, and when it was first used the windows were only partially glazed. The original seats were probably mere benches; square pews were built against the north and south walls, by individuals, in 1769 and afterwards. A little grove of poplars was planted beside it, and beneath their scanty shade the fathers of the parish one by one lay down to rest. At the close of our first period, however, in the spring of 1750, the building itself had probably not been used at all, and the congregation must, during the greater part of those six years, have assembled in private houses. More than one house thus doing duty as an Episcopal church may be in existence to-day, among them the fourth dwelling-house north of the foundry in Fair street, built, I suppose, by Nathaniel Johnson in 1746. Here, during the four or five years following, we may reasonably believe that Dr. Samuel Johnson often preached and administered the sacraments. Assuming this, no building now remains in Guilford which has a stronger claim upon us for reverent interest.

The second period of our history covers about fourteen years, from 1750 to 1764, and is defined by the rather infrequent ministrations of a clergyman who was, nevertheless, in some sense the minister of the parish until almost the close of the period. This was the Rev. Ebenezer Punderson of North Groton (now Ledyard), who had, for about sixteen years, held an

¹ Draft of letter dated 1752, in parish archives.

appointment from the Venerable Society as an itinerant missionary. Early in 1750 he took Guilford, with other places in this neighborhood, under his care.¹ He had, what Mr. Lyons had lacked, a formal commission for Guilford, and this gave him, as he doubtless believed, a title before the law to the rates levied on resident Episcopalians for the support of public worship, although the local officials might not agree with him in his interpretation of the law. By an act passed in 1727 the collectors of rates were required to pay what was received from avowed conformists to any "person in orders, according to ye Canons of ye Church of England, settled and abiding among them, and performing divine service so near to any person yt hath declared himself of the Church of England that he can conveniently and doth attend the publick worship there." In such cases taxes for building meeting-houses were not to be collected, and an organized society of Episcopalians might levy additional taxes for its own uses, if necessary.² The description of those thus exempted from the obligation of supporting Congregational worship was rather vague, and might be, as it was, interpreted very differently by different collectors and magistrates. In 1728, when the only missionaries in Connecticut were in Fairfield county, namely, Samuel Johnson and his young friend, Henry Caner of the town of Fairfield, the latter tells us that none were regarded as living "near" an Episcopal church unless they lived "within a mile or two." Episcopalians thought themselves wronged by a rule which, if applied to Congregationalists, would have deprived every Congregational minister of a considerable part of his salary, and some of them exposed themselves to imprisonment by refusing to pay the ministers' rates. And when Mr. Caner proposed that he be appointed missionary for the whole territory west of Fairfield, changing his residence from time to time, the Society obtained a legal opinion to the effect that an appointment "to two or three places" would not release conformists from payments to the local ministers.³ But a more liberal interpretation slowly gained ground among Con-

¹ *Christ Ch. Recs.*; *Abstracts of S. P. G.*; *Digest of Rec. of S. P. G.*, 46, 854; Beardsley's *Hist. of Ch. in Conn.*, i, 166.

² *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i, 282-3; *Connecticut Colonial Records*, vii, 107.

³ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i, 133-5, 235, 253-4, 278-9, etc.; Beardsley, *Hist. of Ch. in Conn.*, 71, 73-4, 129, etc.

gregationalists, and in 1736 Mr. Punderson himself had secured from Governor Talcott a recognition of his right to the rates of conformists living in a neighboring town, in terms which implied, what the laws in existence assumed, that citizens of Connecticut had a right to select the Christian ministry and worship which they should support, provided these were made even moderately accessible. Governor Talcott not unnaturally advised conformists not to refuse the payment of rates when demanded in due form, but practically recommended payment under protest, with resort to the county court for redress.¹ Mr. Punderson, it would seem, had not always found this course successful,² but in the majority of cases, and in the case of Guilford, it was not necessary for him to adopt it, his claim being promptly acknowledged by the collectors.³ The First Society might well have grown heartily tired, in its long and fruitless struggle with those who formed the Fourth Society, of attempts to control separatists by the help of the civil law. It is quite true that whatever friendly regard for the Church of England had existed among the colonists gave place to strong dislike when that church began to rear its altars in Connecticut and to gather around them bands of worshippers recruited from the families of Congregational ministers and deacons. But as a rule the First Society exercised much forbearance towards the young parish of Christ Church, and probably saved many of its own members thereby. This is more noteworthy because of what was taking place in North Guilford, where the Third Society (as it was then styled) was repeating the experiment of coercion with the usual results. The death of Samuel Russell in 1746 had been followed by a struggle over the succession much like the one which began eighteen years earlier in Guilford, except that the seceding party became Episcopalians. Here Mr. Punderson's claim to the rates was vigorously resisted, and the collectors, trying to gather them for Mr. Russell's son-in-law, Mr.

¹ *Talcott Papers*, ii. 9-13, forming vol. v. of *Connecticut Historical Society Collections*, from advance sheets.

² *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 257-8.

³ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 262

Richards, lost "much blood," though not, presumably, from blows that had reached any vital organ.¹

As Mr. Punderson lived more than thirty miles away, and his missionary journeys extended beyond the limits of Connecticut, his oversight of the parish was at first extremely limited. He officiated here in May, 1750, and in the September following he preached in the church, "to abundance," on a week-day.² This is the first use of the building of which I find a record, and the walls then only consisted of beams and clapboards, while windows had hardly been thought of.³ It was not until the thirteenth of March, 1751, that the church was formally opened with a sermon by Dr. Johnson, from the words, "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (Psalms xcvi. 9). At that date, moreover, it was voted to use the church regularly on Sundays and holy days, and it was declared that its name was "Christ's Church," which was also announced as the name of the parish. Another vote appropriated the rates, if Mr. Punderson should consent, to putting in glass. This shows how missionary stipends might help even a parish which enjoyed only a small fraction of a missionary's services. It also shows that the Guilford collectors put a generous construction on the law. It would have been extremely easy to plead that their conforming neighbors were not getting as much religious instruction, even of the kind which they preferred, as the commonwealth of Connecticut intended they should get, and on that ground to have turned the rates over to Mr. Ruggles, whom they could hear every Sunday. It would have been rather hard to meet this plea, for the conformists were not satisfied themselves with the attention which Mr. Punderson was able to bestow upon them. In the autumn of 1751 they determined, by his advice, to unite with North Guilford and Branford in obtaining the services of a candidate for orders for the winter. A little later, in December, 1751, and January, 1752, the three parishes, strengthened by the accession of the younger congregation at New Haven, and

¹ *Contribut. to Eccles. Hist. of Conn.*, 453; *Rec. of Third Soc.*, May, 1751, quoted in *Smith's MS.*; *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 262-3, 280, 290-1. The name "Cohassett," often occurring in the work last cited, should be read "Cohabit," the old name of North Guilford.

² *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 263, 271-2.

³ *Christ Ch. Rec.*

guided by Dr. Johnson, formally constituted themselves a mission. In August, 1752, they invited the Rev. Solomon Palmer of Cornwall, a native of Branford, to be their missionary. Mr. Palmer's brother and Nathaniel Johnson of Guilford were sent to notify the new missionary of his election. As he was then, and continued to be for more than a year longer, the Congregational pastor at Cornwall, one imagines that the situation created by the appearance of the Anglican embassy might have been a rather embarrassing one. It seems that Mr. Palmer's inclination to enter the Church of England, though known to his friends at Branford, had not yet become a purpose, and that the invitation was premature. And when his adhesion to episcopacy was made known to his Cornwall parishioners in March, 1754, it surprised them very much.¹

In the meantime efforts were made to finish the church building, still only partly glazed. In October, 1752, the wardens, who were then Edmund Ward and Nathaniel Johnson, under the advice of the latter's brother, wrote letters to two clergymen in the distant province of South Carolina, asking for assistance. One of them was the Rev. Jonathan Copp, a Connecticut man, who had lately visited Guilford, and may have encouraged the appeal. The other was, beyond question, the Rev. Alexander Garden of Charleston, commissary of the Bishop of London for that portion of the colonies, with oversight of the clergy. In that character the evangelist Whitfield, who had previously pronounced him, very truthfully, "a good soldier of Jesus Christ," had a taste of his fighting qualities, and the Guilford wardens allude sympathetically to the commissary's bearing in the conflict. They state that the parish then contained but twelve families, precisely the number of rate-payers in 1750. It is clear that the growth of the congregation was extremely slow, if indeed it was then growing at all. The wardens also state that some of their North Guilford brethren, who would have helped them, were, or had been, in jail for the non-payment of the minister's rates. Nothing seems to have come of these letters (drafts of which, probably in Mr. Ward's handwriting,

¹ *Christ Ch. Rec.*; Bailey's *Trinity Ch.*, 7-9; *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 128; Gold's *History of Cornwall*, 49-51.

are among our parish documents), and it is even possible that they were never sent.¹

In the summer of 1753 this parish attained the object which had been striven for a year or two before. It was combined in a mission with New Haven and Branford, and, as I infer, with North Guilford also, by the act of the Venerable Society. The missionary appointed was the man who had been serving them under a less definite commission, and who now removed to New Haven. In leaving his old post Mr. Punderson exchanged a stipend of £70 sterling from the Society, for one of £50. But thirteen persons in Guilford subscribed between six and seven pounds sterling towards his support, and if the other parishes gave as much in proportion, this difference was more than made good.² The limitation of Mr. Punderson's territory to three adjoining towns (or townships) may have helped to terminate the struggle at North Guilford. An attempt had been made there in 1752 to save the rates of conformists by employing a young clergyman living at Middletown, Mr. Camp, who officiated "steadily" among them. It failed because Mr. Camp was not yet in the service of the Venerable Society, and had not "any place in particular assigned to him in his license" (from the Bishop of London).³ But in September, 1753, the conformists were granted land on which to build their church,⁴ which makes it probable that Mr. Punderson's claim, in virtue of his appointment to the newly established mission, was felt to be too strong to be resisted, or, perhaps, that the lesson of toleration had at last been learned. How well it had been learned in the First Society, is pleasantly shown by the fact that at the close of the next year (December 4, 1754,) that society "Voted, That the conformists to the Church of England shall have Liberty to have the Bell rung upon their feast & fast days or other Hollidays when it doth not interfere with any of the days for public worship of the 1th Society during the pleasure of s^d Society. They paying the Bellman."⁵

¹ *Christ Ch. Rec.*; Dalcho's *Church of South Carolina*, 128-46, 163-74, 176-8, 361; Tyerman's *Life of George Whitefield*, i. 142, 361-3, 395-401.

² *Christ Ch. Rec.*; *Abst. of S. P. G. for 1762*; *Lett. of S. P. G.* (Harwood MS.), vol. B. 23 (294); *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 21.

³ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 298-9.

⁴ *Smith MS.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

Mr. Punderson was a generous man, and a diligent and successful missionary, as he had been a useful and honored Congregational minister, though Dr. Johnson thought him not well adapted to New Haven, now the principal scene of his labors.¹ He remained in charge of the new mission for about ten years, or until 1763, but for that period the records of this parish almost fail us, while Mr. Punderson's own manuscripts, which might have thrown light on this period, were lost by shipwreck after his death.² A printed letter of the wardens for the year 1768 (of which I have made much use), informs us, however, that Guilford gained less than it hoped for from the arrangement. Mr. Punderson's work in the neighborhood of New Haven grew on his hands, even if the church in that town did not thrive. Six, if not seven, congregations were under his care within the three townships assigned to him, and this congregation, which had expected to see him once a month, at last did not see him at all.³ The desire naturally arose to become part of a less extensive mission, and with it at least the hope that Guilford might be the seat of the mission. But to this end the Society's demand of a house and a glebe, or tract of land, however small, for the missionary's use, must be met. Great efforts were therefore made to secure money for the purchase of a glebe, and the statement of the wardens, in 1768, that they "had obtained everything" which they had "struggled for, except the Society's patronage," almost seems to imply that their efforts had been successful. Our defective records give us no information about this matter, but it would appear that the requisite amount could not be collected at home. Accordingly, as I suppose in 1763, the parish appealed for help to Mr. St. George Talbot, of the province of New York, who had shown much interest in the progress of the Church of England in Connecticut, and who did assist other parishes very liberally. He was understood to promise the sum of £200, and is said to have left a blank space

¹ Beardsley, *Hist. of Ch. in Conn.*, i. 91-2, 166, etc.; *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, i. 311; ii. 21, 39-40, 42, etc.

² Letter from Rev. X. A. Welton of Poquetanuck.

³ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 128; *Dig. of S. P. G. Rec.*, 854; *Abst. of S. P. G. for 1763*; *Lett. of S. P. G.* (Harwood MS.) vol. B., 23 (293). The seven congregations, never all named together, were those of New Haven, West Haven, North Haven, Branford, Northford, Guilford and North Guilford.

in his will for a bequest to the parish of that amount. He died about five years later without filling the blank, and though it was hoped for a while that the Venerable Society, to which he must have made a considerable bequest, would devote part of it to Guilford, all such hopes were disappointed, and Guilford had to take care of itself. And as we have explicit testimony to the effect that Mr. Talbot's anticipated gift was to be used in buying a glebe, while the wardens do not say in so many words that a glebe was bought, and as I have found no evidence of such a purchase either in church or town records, it is nearly certain that the parish continued to lack, as it still lacks, this important part of its endowment, and that it was for this reason that it could not obtain "the Society's patronage" in the form of a stipend for a resident minister.¹

Of course the services must have been conducted by lay-readers during the long intervals between Mr. Punderson's visits. And in 1759, when those visits were becoming still less frequent, a young man of twenty, already well qualified for this duty, took his place in the congregation. This was Nathaniel Johnson's stepson, Bela Hubbard, whose mother had become the second wife of Captain Johnson in 1755. Mr. Hubbard had graduated in New Haven in 1758, and had pursued his studies for a year under the direction of Dr. Johnson, lately made first president of King's College (now Columbia), in New York. He designed to take orders, but was too young to be ordained, and no doubt continued to study at home. Dr. Johnson recommended him to the parish as a lay-reader, and he probably began to act as such under the nominal incumbent, Mr. Punderson, at least as early as 1760. At the beginning of 1761 he was formally chosen reader by the two Guilford parishes, and held the position until he reached the age of twenty-four, required by the canons for taking priest's orders. As he became twenty-four in August, 1763, and sailed for England a little later, his term of service lasted more than two years and a half.² At this date Mr. Punderson had already been transferred from the New

¹ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 26-7, 55-6, 121, 123-4, 127-8; *Lett. of S. P. G.* (Harwood MS.), vol. B. 23 (2); Beardsley, *Hist. of Ch. in Conn.*, i. 212-3, 238.

² *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 128; *Records of St. John's Ch.*, North Guilford; Talcott's *Guilf. Gen.*; Sprague's *Annals*, v. 234.

Haven mission to Rye, and had been succeeded, in the summer of 1763, by the Rev. Solomon Palmer, whose services Guilford had tried to secure twelve years before. As Guilford and Branford still formed part of the mission, it is not unlikely that the former town was visited by Mr. Palmer, as the latter is said to have been. His incumbency at Guilford must, however, have been even more purely nominal than that of Mr. Punderson. Mr. Hubbard, nevertheless, may have acted, technically, under Mr. Palmer's direction for a few months. But New Haven now desired to be made a distinct mission, while Branford, which Dr. Johnson would have had combined with Guilford and "their villages, Cohabit and Pauge" (North Guilford and Northford), not long after aspired to entire independence, although it had no church building. At all events Guilford and North Guilford, acting apart from Branford, but apparently with the expectation of help from Killingworth, invited Bela Hubbard to become their minister. They pledged £30 sterling towards his support, which provided him with the "title for orders" demanded by the canon, that is, the assurance that there was "some certain Place where he might use his Function." The Society, it was hoped, would erect these congregations into a mission, with sufficient additional salary to enable the missionary to live in comfort. In the meantime provision had had to be made here, perhaps by Mr. Hubbard and his relatives, for the expenses of his journey, not far from £100 sterling. This was the posture of affairs at the close of our second period, early in 1764.¹

The parish had evidently made some progress, little as Mr. Punderson had been able to do for it. The unquenchable zeal of the laity was of more service than the infrequent clerical ministrations which were obtainable. In October, 1763, Dr. Johnson wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury that there were fifty families and as many communicants in Guilford. This enumeration is doubtless an estimate, and it must include members of both the parishes in the town. The same writer, perhaps a very little later, informed the Society that there were "30 or 40 families" in both.² It is, moreover, probable that at that time the

¹ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 37-8, 39-45, 49-51, 103, 128; *Absts. of S. P. G.*, 1764; *Hist. of Ch. in Conn.*, i. 209-10; Bailey's *Trinity Ch.*, 9, 53.

² *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 54; *Absts. of S. P. G.*, 1764.

North Guilford parish, formed by the secession at one time of a considerable minority from the Congregational Church, was larger than ours. As lately as 1810 it must have contained several more communicants, though fewer families.¹ But assuming that there were only fifteen or twenty families in Christ Church in 1763, leaving twenty-five or thirty for St. John's, North Guilford, there had still been an advance since 1752, when there were only twelve. The scanty local records of the period furnish only two new family names which seem to belong to Guilford, those of Stone and Benton, though new Christian names are much more numerous. The name of Hubbard should doubtless be added, and there must have been others. It is a fact too interesting to be passed over that Joel Stone, the infant son of Stephen, baptized here by Mr. Punderson in 1750, is commemorated to-day, as Colonel Stone, by a painted church window, containing his likeness in the dignified dress of a century ago, on the north bank of the St. Lawrence, in the Canadian town of Ganonoque, Ontario, of which he is revered as the founder.² And it is worth observing that the migratory impulse, which has cost Guilford so much, was already strong in the last century. It has wholly removed many names from the lists of this parish, while some which remain are borne by descendants of other branches of the same families. The old Registry Book of Christ Church, Stratford, supplies two individual names of interest. One is that of the venerable Andrew Ward, father of Edmund Ward, and grandfather of Bela Hubbard, and one of the original members of the Fourth Church, who became a communicant in the Church of England in 1750, at the age of eighty. The other is that of young Theophilus Morgan, doubtless a nephew of the first wife of Captain Johnson, and a resident of Killingworth, baptized as an adult in 1754. Here we meet one of the earlier traces of attachment to the Anglican church in the parish of Jared Eliot, Samuel Smithson's son-in-law, who long before was himself almost persuaded to apply for episcopal orders.

Our third period begins with the return of Bela Hubbard from England in June, 1764, and covers about three years. Mr. Hubbard came home a priest of the Church of England, and

¹ *Convention Journal*, 1811 (reprint), p. 65.

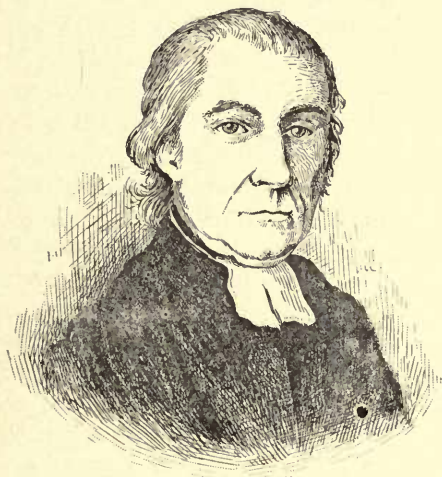
Communicated by Mrs. N. A. H. Moore. See also *Gan. Reporter*, Dec. 15, 22, 1894.

brought with him, no doubt, a license to officiate from the Bishop of London, whose jurisdiction embraced the colonial churches. But he did not come as a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and Guilford was no longer recognized by the Society as even a part of one of its missions. Dr. Johnson had predicted this result, while he had pleaded the cause of the parish in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, but its members continued to hope that help would soon be given them.¹ The resources of the Society were no doubt heavily taxed, and it may have been really unable at that time to erect a new mission. But had those whom the Society represented been as eager to "episcopize" New England as they were supposed to be, the resources of the Society would have been more abundant, and Guilford, with the claim established by its long struggle, and supported by the powerful influence of Dr. Johnson, would not have been almost wholly neglected. Our parish is an important witness to the real aims of the Venerable Society in its work among a people already provided with such Christian institutions as satisfied most of them. It sought simply to aid those, desirous of conforming to the Church of England, who were earnest enough and numerous enough to bear a large part of the burden themselves. It planted its New England missions where the soil gave the fairest promise of a vigorous growth; perhaps not a bad example for other missionary societies in similar circumstances, though its rule bore hardly upon Guilford.

Mr. Hubbard, therefore, had to content himself with the thirty pounds sterling which his congregations offered him, increased by some private income of his own. In those days a country minister might perhaps live on what he received, but he could scarcely support a family on it. One mark of the Venerable Society's favor he probably did bring back with him, and it remains as a memorial not only of his ministry here, but of that of the lay-ministers who served under him and after him. This is the folio Prayer Book, used here to-night, and bearing abundant marks of use during the later years of the colonial period, especially in those parts of the volume which a layman could read publicly.

¹ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 53-4.

Mr. Hubbard's services were for a while required at Northford, and he did work as an itinerant at Branford, New Haven, Saybrook, and even Litchfield.¹ Of the three congregations which formed his permanent cure Killingworth deserves further mention. This name, it must be remembered, belonged then, and for many years afterwards, to what is now Clinton, the present Killingworth being then a society, or parish, in the same township, but known as North Killingworth. If there could be any doubt as to the identification of the eastern part of Mr. Hub-



BELA HUBBARD, D. D.

bard's cure with Clinton it would be removed by his own description of the place as "a seaport Town 10 miles distant."² Jared Eliot, the Congregational pastor of Killingworth, who, after openly declaring in 1722 his doubts about the validity of his ordination, had found his doubts removed, nevertheless remained all his life friendly to the Church of England.³ He died in the spring of 1763, and before Mr. Hubbard's departure in the autumn it seems certain that a number of families at Killing-

¹ *Lett. of S. P. G.* (Harwood MS.), vol. B. 23 (166); *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 107.

² *Lett. of S. P. G.*, as in last note.

³ Beardsley, *Hist. of Ch. in Conn.*, i. 28-30.

worth had made known their attachment to episcopacy, while others were understood to be ready to declare themselves conformists.¹ It may fairly be guessed, though I find no authority for affirming, that regard for Mr. Eliot had prevented any earlier attempt to establish a congregation of conformists. And Mr. Hubbard's language, in the letter to the Venerable Society just referred to, shows that at least as respects most of the new congregation, the final act of conformity took place after his return from England. Between thirty and forty families, he tells us, then conformed. Another contemporary authority gives the number of heads of families, at the close of 1766, as about thirty-four. This congregation must have been the largest of the three, though perhaps the weakest financially, in spite of the presence of two or three wealthy and influential men.² They were apparently not strong enough to build a church, and this placed them at a serious disadvantage.

Less than two years ago (December 4, 1892,) I gave an account of Dr. Hubbard in this place. I need only say now that he was a man of extraordinary sweetness of character, while inflexible in his devotion to duty and to truth, and capable of playing a hero's part, as he did afterwards at New Haven, when in the face of the pestilence he stood firmly at his post, and even added, it is said, the duties and risks of a nurse to those of a pastor. His preaching undoubtedly did his hearers good, and he could say of the fathers of this congregation that they "generally adorn the Doctrine of our Lord and Saviour, by sober, exemplary Lives."³ To a large extent, no doubt, they came from that class of Congregationalists which used to "own the covenant" without becoming communicants. They came because their consciousness of religious obligation was so deep that they must be communicants when they might. And the letters of the missionaries make it clear that they were more faithful in this respect than their successors are now, and that in all respects they were as good Christians as most others were then. It would be hard to find a better example of one fine type of Christian living than is furnished by the unselfish, blameless, patient,

1 *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 54. Killingworth is not named, but no other place can be meant.

2 *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 105-7.

3 *Lett. of S. P. G.*, as above; cf. *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 106.

beneficent life of Bela Hubbard, and what he was his people, who dearly loved him, must in their various degrees have aspired to be.

The outward growth of the parish seems to have been slight during Mr. Hubbard's incumbency. In January, 1767, a few months before it closed, he reported upwards of eighty families in his three congregations. As we must assign upwards of thirty families to Killingworth, we have about fifty for the two Guilfords, or the same number as we find in Dr. Johnson's letter of October, 1763. But as Johnson gives a smaller number in a nearly contemporary report, having been furnished, we may infer, only with estimates, there is room for a probable assumption that this congregation had increased a little. It would not have been strange, however, had there been a decided decrease. A powerful influence, unfriendly to growth, came into operation here and elsewhere during Mr. Hubbard's pastorate. The Stamp Act was passed in 1765, in violation of all the traditions of English liberty, since it involved the taking of men's money without their consent. Opposition to it was almost universal, far more so than the determination to resist other unconstitutional exactions by force, a few years later. The old lay-reader of Guilford, William Samuel Johnson, was perhaps the most important member of the Stamp Act Congress, called to obtain the repeal of the act, and even his father thought the course of Parliament "very ill-judged." But Mr. Hubbard, with others of the younger clergy, and some not young, regarded it as "nothing short of rebellion . . . to avow opposition," and their people generally agreed with them.² Such an attitude must have done as much as anything could have done to check the growth of the church. And another unfortunate result followed, which was an additional blow to the hopes of the Guilford Episcopalians. This was the determination of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, adopted in 1766, in consequence of the commotions established by the Stamp Act, to establish no more missions in New England.³ For several years complaints against the Society had been frequent and bitter,

¹ *Autobiography*, (MS.) sect. 54.

² *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 81, 106-7, etc.

³ *Ibid.*, ii. 102-3; Beardsley, *Hist. of Ch. in Conn.* i. 102-3.

and the fear lest Bishops should be sent to America, to be supported by general taxation and to exercise secular authority as at home, became a very active element in the popular discontent. The fear, though not warranted by the attitude of sober-minded Episcopalians, was neither unnatural nor wholly unreasonable, and the willingness of the home government to set aside colonial rights, which was betrayed in the Stamp Act, made a farther violation of rights seem more probable. Guilford itself was the scene of a most important step in the struggle against an American episcopate when, in 1766, the General Association of Connecticut sat here, with Thomas Ruggles as its moderator, and received, and readily responded to, proposals from the Presbyterian Synod for an alliance in the struggle. Altogether, the brief period of Mr. Hubbard's ministry abounded in evil portents for the future of the Church of England.

Nevertheless this was the brightest period in the history of the parish during the last century, as it was the only one, as far as I can learn, when it had a resident minister. And when, in the summer of 1767, acting under the advice of his clerical brethren, Mr. Hubbard took charge of the mission at New Haven, to be honored and loved there for nearly half a century, the people were heart-broken. His removal seems to have been inevitable if he were to have a home of his own. Dr. Johnson testifies that the people could not "provide a tolerable support for Mr. Hubbard," though neither could "bear part." He long hesitated, and even at one time felt "compelled to tarry among them."¹ As his marriage took place in less than a year after he left Guilford (May 15, 1768), it is probable enough that his purpose to marry finally settled the question.² There is a pathetic letter to the Society from the churchwardens, Nathaniel Johnson and Samuel Collins, written in July, 1768, a year after Mr. Hubbard's removal, of which I have made much use, which vividly portrays the sorrow of the congregation. The loss, say the writers, was "so distressing to us, that words cannot express it. . . . Some of us are almost ready to say our wound is incurable. . . . The removal of Mr. Hubbard has given the Church the heaviest blow that ever it received."³

¹ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 103, 107.

² Talcott's *Guilf. Geneal.*; Sprague, *Ann. of Amer. Pulp.*, v. 235.

³ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 129.

The new family names appearing in the records during these three years, and which I can do no more than mention, are Bradley, Ludinton, Shelley, Fairchild and Campbell. It will be remembered that these names are not taken from lists of parishioners, which do not exist for this period, but are given as they occur for various reasons in the records. There were probably some members of the congregation whose names do not appear at all, and some may have entered it long before there was any occasion, such as the baptism of a child, for recording their names.

We have traversed less than half the first fifty years of our parochial life, but we can make a briefer passage through the rest. And the next stage shall be a long one, of seventeen years, carrying us through the Revolution, and ending in 1784. This period, the fourth, has its limit defined for us with tolerable accuracy by the continuance of Mr. Hubbard's pastoral oversight in such measure as his new duties permitted him to maintain it. This parish, however, and doubtless the whole cure of three congregations, naturally desired more constant services than he could possibly give, and made an effort to secure them. And the leaders of our congregation, with those whom they led, never appear to better advantage than when all hearts were still aching with the wound inflicted by Mr. Hubbard's removal. The veteran churchwardens, both now past sixty, spoke in the spirit of Thomas Hooker of Hartford when, testifying for the "Congregational way," he declared that "Christ, the King of his Church and Master of his House, he only in reason, can make laws that are Authentick for the government thereof."¹ To these Guilford Episcopalians, presumably drawn towards the Church of England, at first, by their desire to enjoy the sacraments on Catholic terms, the order of that Church, the historic order of Christendom, had come to seem that which their King and Master had established. And so they were "assured," they "firmly believed," that theirs was "the cause of Christ;" they might well, with the same Thomas Hooker, have regarded church government as "a fundamentall point of Religion." In the strength of this conviction, much stronger in them than in those who then controlled church action in Eng-

¹ *Survey of the Summe of Church Discipline*, Pt. I., 5.

land, and hoping against hope, they appealed once more, in 1768, to the Venerable Society. They had unanimously invited John Tyler of Wallingford, a candidate who had been serving among them as lay-reader, "to go home for orders," and he had consented to come back to Guilford if the Society would grant only a small addition to the salary which could be given by the people of his cure. Before the letter was written Mr. Tyler had received priest's orders, and then the Society sent him to Norwich.¹

But Mr. Hubbard had stipulated with his New Haven flock that he should visit his old parishioners four times a year,² and he was their minister in as real a sense as Mr. Punderson had been. Our records show that he was often here on Sunday, and we may fairly suppose that he went, sometimes to North Guilford and Killingworth. He gave the Holy Communion to the people, he baptized their children, he married their young people, he buried their dead. He was even recognized by the civil authorities as the incumbent of the parish; rates were paid to him in 1770 and 1776; in 1780 he presided at a parish meeting. His ministrations did not wholly cease until near the close of the century,³ if they ceased then, but during the present period of seventeen years, it does not appear that this parish secured, or, after the failure of Mr. Tyler's case, attempted to secure, any other minister than Bela Hubbard. His, however, were not the only clerical services which were rendered here. Seven of the Connecticut clergy besides Mr. Hubbard are recorded at least once as visiting Guilford, often on a Sunday. Among them were Abraham Jarvis, afterwards our second Bishop, Jeremiah Leaming, the first choice of the clergy for our first Bishop, and Roger Viets, uncle and early instructor of Bishop Griswold of the Eastern Diocese. But I may be pardoned for speaking with pleasure of the fact that the first clerical name thus introduced into our records, and the name which occurs oftenest, is that of Samuel Andrews, the missionary at Wallingford. He had promised a yearly visit on a Sunday or a Holy Day,¹ and he evidently kept his promise until his loyalist sympathies, as tradi-

¹ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 129; *Life and Corresp. of Samuel Johnson*, 333-4; *Hist. of Ch. in Conn.*, i. 270.

² *Lett. of S. P. G.* (Harwood MS.), vol. B., 23 (168).

³ Dr. Hubbard's *Notitia Parochialis*, at New Haven, contains the record of many official acts performed here, as well as elsewhere out of New Haven.

tion says, limited his journeys to his own premises, except by written permission of the Wallingford selectmen. Among the children baptized by him was Roxana, daughter of Eli Foote, who became the wife of the famous Lyman Beecher, and the mother of children still more famous. I venture to think of this kinsman of mine as for about seven years Mr. Hubbard's chief assistant in the care of Christ Church, Guilford.



CHRIST CHURCH, GUILFORD, CONSECRATED DEC. 12, 1838.

Loyalist sympathies undoubtedly prevailed in this congregation, to its detriment, when the war broke out, although Guilford Episcopalians and their sons were found among the patriot soldiers. And I imagine that we should obtain a nearly complete list of the men of the parish if we could find an enrollment made by the town's order on the twelfth of July, 1781. This was less than a month after a marauding expedition, in which were some refugees, had landed at Leete's Island, and Simeon Leete and Ebenezer Hart had lost their lives in beating the

plunderers off.¹ Doubtless under an angry impulse given by this tragedy, "Sundry inhabitants" were put on record "as Inimical to the Liberties" of their country. I trust that nobody now believes that this was a fair description of men many of whom, however mistaken in opinion, loved American liberty with all their hearts, but believed, with that spotless patriot, William Samuel Johnson, that liberty might be safe under the free constitution of the mighty empire of which they all had long been proud of being subjects. And in less than nine years the town of Guilford seems to have come to this view of matters. On the twelfth of April, 1790, it was ordered that the names thus enrolled be expunged, and that the "s^d enrollment no longer form any part of the Records of this Town." The expunging process must have consisted in burning a loose sheet of paper, for there is no space for the enrollment in the existing records, and it can never have been placed there. Even in an hour of intense and natural exasperation the Guilford instinct of justice was too strong to permit good neighbors and true friends to be branded for life.

Before the war the parish must have grown faster than one would have expected, if, as a fragment of a letter apparently written in 1774 reports, it then contained thirty-seven families.² But there may have easily been an abatement of unfriendly feeling towards the Church of England after the repeal of the Stamp Act, and in 1772 Mr. Hubbard wrote from New Haven that his congregation had increased one-third in less than five years, and that he had "the happiness to see the greatest unanimity reigning amongst" his people and their fellow Christians.³ During the war the parish must have lost ground, and I have the authority of Dr. Bennett for the statement, coming down, I suppose, as a tradition, that the church building suffered from lawless violence. The lead of the window sashes (bought, as our records show, from the First Society,) is said to have been appropriated by zealous patriots, and run into bullets to be fired at King George's soldiers. But it is also said that the services on Sunday never ceased, though laymen commonly conducted

¹ Smith's *Hist. of Guilford*, 49-50.

² *Christ Ch. Rec.*

³ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 181.

them, and we now know that during all those stormy years a priest of the Church led here from time to time the worship of the congregation according to the order of the Church of England. One office or another of the Prayer Book, as Bela Hubbard's New Haven records show, was used by him throughout the period of the war, as well as before and after. And probably no year passed without his offering here the memorial sacrifice, to maintain their share in which his friends and kinsmen, fulfilling a priesthood as real as his own, had so often and so long offered themselves as a living sacrifice.

In the early part of this period, too, (1769,) they built the pulpit which could be so seldom filled, and again and again gave permission for the building of pews for worshippers whom their fear of God, and not their admiration for a man, might be trusted to draw to the House of God. And they could not, till they must, relinquish the hope that what they so longed for and had struggled so hard to secure, the regular ministrations of the Church, the Society in England would at last consent to give them. In spite of its resolution to establish no more missions in New England, and suspending its rule requiring a house and glebe as the condition of a grant, the Society had sent a missionary to Pomfret in 1772. This exception was made out of regard to the wishes of a wealthy layman, Godfrey Malbone, who himself gave largely to the new mission, and in the expectation that the usual additional provision for the missionary would soon be made.¹ Even before this excuse for a fresh application had been given, or in January, 1771, the parish had directed the wardens to write to the Venerable Society, asking that a mission might be established here.² And after the favorable action in the case of Pomfret, in September, 1773, the principal layman of New Haven, Enos Alling, himself a member of the Society, addressed a letter to the secretary, warmly pleading the cause of Guilford.³ Samuel Johnson, their most influential friend, was dead, but a few days later the clergy of Connecticut, assembled in "a voluntary Convention," mentioned the desires of this

¹ *Abst. of S. P. G.*, 1773; *Hist. of Ch. in Conn.*, i, 273-5, 281.

² *Christ Ch. Rec.*

³ *Lett. of S. P. G.* (Harwood MS.), vol. B. 23 (2).

parish to the same official.¹ In August, 1774, the parish made, or began to make, what was perhaps its last appeal, in which Abraham Jarvis, afterwards Bishop of this diocese, may have lent his assistance.² But the Society was inexorable, and Guilford was left to practice the lesson, for which it has had much use, of self-reliance.

Towards the close of our present period, in November, 1783, we find an entry which suggests that the parish had produced, and was making use of, another candidate for orders. This was young Andrew Fowler, son of Andrew, and grandson of Mrs. Johnson's sister, Andrea Morgan. He had just graduated at New Haven, where for two years he had acted as lay-reader under Mr. Hubbard, with the sanction of President Stiles. He was afterwards ordained in New York by Bishop Provoost, and is remembered for many useful labors, among the rest for having presented the first class for confirmation in the diocese of South Carolina.³ Of the ministers who had thus far been reared within the territorial limits of the First Society, at least one-third, as far as I can learn, took episcopal orders.

Seventeen new family names appear on the records between 1767 and 1784, those of Geers, Powers, Ranney, Leete, Ruggles, Hotchkin (Hotchkiss), Ebair, Hill, Miller, Fowler, Foote, Smith, Hall, Cruttenden, Ingraham, Caldwell and Redfield. I cannot be sure, however, that all of them belong to Guilford.

The next and last period of our early history, with which the narrative reaches the point where the old records, newly discovered, meet those long in our possession, measures sixteen years. Opening July 5, 1784, it closes December 22, 1800, within a few days of the beginning of this century. Throughout most of this period the parish was engaged in efforts, more or less successful, and made in connection with other parishes, to secure clerical services. Such efforts, put forth in a time of great weakness everywhere, show the inextinguishable energy and courage with which the children and grandchildren of the founders of the church sought to perpetuate the good work of

¹ *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 191.

² *Ch. Ch. Rec.*

³ *Christ Ch. Rec.*; Sprague, *Annals*, v. 428; Perry's *History of the American Episcopal Church*, ii. 189.

their fathers. The effects of the war had been disastrous to the cause of episcopacy, and the Venerable Society could not, under its charter, employ missionaries outside of the British dominions. All stipends were to cease on the twenty-ninth of September, 1785.¹ Guilford had never enjoyed a large share of the Society's bounty, and for twenty years it had received nothing. Now, all hope of assistance from that quarter was finally cut off. But many congregations had leaned on the Society too heavily and too long, and it was on the whole a very good thing for American Episcopalians that they were at last compelled to pay their own bills.² The stimulating effect of the new situation seems illustrated by the case of Branford, where the parish, flourishing in 1766, then practically disappears from view until 1784, and the organization must have lapsed. Life was not extinct, however, and the names of fifty-four members in the year last mentioned indicate greater strength than our own parish possessed. And at Branford, on the fifth of July, 1784, a meeting was held for consultation about the employment of a clergyman, in which representatives of North Guilford and, undoubtedly, of Guilford took part. The parishes wished to secure the services of Mr. Ashbel Baldwin, of Litchfield, then a lay-reader waiting for the coming of a Bishop to ordain him. Attention may have been drawn to Mr. Baldwin by the fact that he had married, or was soon to marry, a granddaughter of Captain Johnson of Guilford. Her father, Mr. Samuel Johnson, was authorized to make terms with Mr. Baldwin, and it would seem that the latter must have shown some disposition to accept the cure, since on the fifteenth of November the parishes voted to offer him, for a year, £80 of the currency of the commonwealth (about £40 sterling). Branford paying half the amount. But by this time he had probably received overtures from his birthplace, and he became the incumbent of St. Michael's, Litchfield, on his ordination a few months later.³ But before the end of November Branford had begun negotiations with another clergyman, the Rev. James Sayre, and on the twentieth of December, 1784, this parish

¹ *Abst. of S. P. G.*, 1785.

² *Conn. Ch. Docs.*, ii. 8, 9.

³ Bailey's *Trinity Church*, 10, 20-1; Sprague's *Annals*, v. 352; Bronson's "Conn. Currency," 135-6, in *N. H. Col. Hist. Soc. Pap.*, vol. i. The date of Mr. Baldwin's marriage is not known.

appointed a committee to act with representatives of Branford and North Guilford in making an engagement with Mr. Sayre. He appears to have served the three parishes during the year 1785, residing in Branford, and they desired to retain his services for another year. Guilford, seconded by North Guilford, offered him inducements to remove his residence to the former place. As one of these inducements was the payment of one-fourth of the rent of a house it is clear that at that period (January, 1786,) this parish had no rectory, and the presumption that it had never been able to purchase a glebe and house, as required by the Venerable Society, is strengthened. Mr. Sayre, however, could not be persuaded to keep the cure, and in February, 1786, the three parishes were consulting about another minister. Their late incumbent, a Scotchman by birth, though a graduate of the college at Philadelphia, in the class of Bishop White, was evidently a good and long a useful man. But his conservatism was so intense and so stubborn that he refused to accept the Prayer Book as revised in 1789 by the newly formed Protestant Episcopal Church, tempted one or two Connecticut parishes into flat rebellion, and finally died insane.¹ For two years whatever pastoral oversight this parish enjoyed seems to have been that of its old friend, Bela Hubbard.

In common with other parishes, however, our own had now a share in the ministrations of a chief pastor. The first American Bishop, of what we call the Anglican Communion, Samuel Seabury, had arrived in Connecticut in June, 1785, after having obtained in Scotland, at the request of the clergy of Connecticut, the consecration which was refused him in England. Complete reports of Bishop Seabury's episcopal visitations do not exist, but we know that he came to Guilford in July, 1786. On the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh of that month he had ordained Benjamin Lindsay successively deacon and priest, and Mr. Lindsay was then "Licensed for North Carolina."² The Bishop of Connecticut had for the time being, and in a certain degree, taken the place once held with respect to the American churches by the Bishop of London, and candidates for orders, from New

¹ Bailey, 21-3; *Rec. of Christ Ch.*; *Rec. of St. John's Ch. (North Guilford)*; *Hist. of Ch. in Conn.*, i. 415, 421-7; *Life and Correspondence of Rev. William Smith, D. D.*, i. 365.

² *Journal of Connecticut Convention*, 1882, p. 154.

Hampshire to Georgia, now made the journey to Connecticut as they would once have made the journey to England. Bishop Seabury had as yet no jurisdiction beyond Connecticut, but Episcopalians who recognized and sought the benefit of the powers inherent in his office, would respect the licenses to offi-



LORENZO T. BENNETT, D. D.

ciate which he gave, as well as his letters of orders. That a man should be made deacon one day and priest the next was in accordance with Anglican usage, when the candidate (as, probably, in the present instance) could not conveniently remain long within easy access to a Bishop. But it shows how little

importance was attached to the office of deacon, in itself considered, as is unhappily still the case. Whether confirmation was administered at this time I have been unable to learn. But if this was Bishop Seabury's first visit it seems almost certain that Mr. Hubbard, who was present, had the happiness of claiming the apostolic rite for the few surviving founders of the parish, with their children and their grandchildren. Mr. Hubbard's mother was still living, with her husband,¹ Captain Johnson, and it would not be very hard to construct a long list of persons who might then have been confirmed. Classes were large in those days, when they often included all or most of the communicants of a congregation. Bishop Seabury is reported to have found the church building so nearly a ruin that he thought that little remained but to say the burial office over it. And if other information is correct the structure may at least have been reduced to something like the condition in which it was when its builders first began to use it, with unglazed windows. But the "spiritual house," the real church, although it was also weakened, and may even have become weaker, still stood, and continued to stand, on the One Foundation.

Our own records fail us for nearly twelve years after August 28, 1786, or until April 23, 1798. The two Guilford parishes and Branford did not maintain their association throughout this period, and North Guilford, which now had a parsonage to offer, seems to have attempted in 1787 to obtain the ministrations of Ashbel Baldwin, asking two-thirds of his time. Mr. Baldwin, one-half of whose time was required at Litchfield, was present at a vestry-meeting at North Guilford in June of that year, and probably gave the proposal serious consideration. It is not unlikely that our own parish was expected to employ Mr. Baldwin a third of the time, but he decided to remain at Litchfield.² While the matter was pending, as I infer, Branford invited the churchmen of the two Guilfords to share the privilege of listening to the Rev. Dr. Leaming on the Sunday after Easter.

¹ Her name seems to have remained until her death on the list of members of the First Church. But it appears there only as that of the wife of Daniel Hubbard, and she is likely to have become an Episcopalian with her father, brother and children.

² *St. John's Ch. Rec.*, North Guilford; *St. Michael's Ch. Rec.*, Litchfield, communicated by the Rector, the Rev. Storrs O. Seymour.

And when we find that in 1788 that parish is believed to have passed under the charge of the Rev. Edward Blakeslee (then in Deacon's orders), who remained there until April, 1790, one conjectures, though one can do little more, that his cure may have included Guilford, if not also North Guilford.¹ For the year 1791 we have no information whatever. June 1, 1792, Bishop Seabury visited Killingworth and Guilford for consultation, and as a result the Rev. David Butler, ordained deacon on the tenth of June, was licensed for the old cure of Bela Hubbard, including North Guilford. A year later, having been ordained priest, he was regularly appointed to the cure.² Branford probably expected to have a minister of its own, though the hope does not seem to have been realized.³ During Mr. Butler's incumbency confirmation was twice administered in each of his three parishes. At the first visitation, October 17, 18 and 19, 1792, seven persons were confirmed in North Guilford, one in Guilford and five in Killingworth; at the second, in June, 1794, twenty-four were confirmed in North Guilford, four in Guilford, and twenty-seven in Killingworth.⁴ The small size of the classes at Guilford strengthens one's belief that most of those of sufficient age had been confirmed in 1786. But it is also probable that this church was at that time the least prosperous of the three, and that St. John's, North Guilford, was the strongest. And the fact that in 1794 the Bishop remained three days, including a Sunday, at North Guilford, and gave but one day to Guilford, confirms the opinion, otherwise supported, that Mr. Butler's residence was at the former place, where was, apparently, the only parsonage in the cure. At Killingworth, where Mr. Hubbard had doubtless conducted occasional services during the twenty-seven years which had passed since he relinquished the cure, and whither he took the Bishop in October, 1791, to meet the "scattered Church people," there seems to have been no church building. Bishop Seabury was therefore twice indebted to the hospitality of Congregationalists for a

¹ Bailey's *Trinity Ch.*, 32; *Journ. of Conn. Conv.*, 1882, pp. 157, 158.

² *Jour. of Conn. Conv.*, 1882, p. 158; MS. *Diary of Bishop Seabury*. For the last reference I am indebted to the Rev. W. J. Seabury, D. D., of New York.

³ Bailey's *Trinity Ch.*, 22-3, 32; *Life of Seabury*, 440.

⁴ *Diary* (by the kindness both of Dr. Seabury and of Dr. Hart, of Trinity College); *Life of Seabury*, 426, 440.

place in which to exercise one of his chief episcopal functions. And, perhaps largely because it had no house of worship, the Killingworth congregation now disappears from our ecclesiastical records even more suddenly than it had appeared. We hear no more of an Episcopal church there for eighty years, the Church of the Holy Advent, Clinton, being organized as a wholly new congregation, in 1874.

Mr. Butler is said to have assumed the rectorship of St. Michael's Church, Litchfield, which Mr. Baldwin relinquished in 1793, in June, 1794, but the records of St. John's, North Guilford, show that he rendered clerical services there until January, 1795. He was afterwards for many years the highly valued rector of St. Paul's Church, Troy, N. Y., and his son, the Rev. Dr. Clement M. Butler, became distinguished as a scholar and professor.¹

For the three following years, 1795, 1796 and 1797, all sources of information fail us, unless we apply to this period a family tradition which asserts that for a while only two men went to church, their families forming the congregation, and one of the two reading service.² As the parish showed some activity immediately before and immediately afterwards, these years may reasonably be regarded as the time when it reached the lowest point of depression. It would seem that there was a rallying of its energies at the close of the war, but that the difficulty of securing permanent clerical services, and the weakness, not to say the unpopularity, of the Church everywhere, discouraged its supporters here. But the parish could not die as long as there was even a single household whose members were weekly summoned by its head to worship in God's House. On the twenty-first of January, 1798, we find Dr. Hubbard spending a Sunday in Guilford, and three months later (April 23) Charles Collins and Thomas Powers were elected wardens. The same choice, the second name being put first, was repeated for many years, and Thomas Powers, the one man who, it is said, never even thought of allowing his children to renounce the worship and

¹ Sprague, *Annals*, v. 389-91; *Gen. Conv. Jour.*, Reprint of Hawks and Perry, i. 175, 212.

² Information given by Mrs. Daniel M. Prentice, a native of Guilford, and granddaughter of Mr. Thomas Powers, one of those mentioned above.

order of the historic church, was the chief officer of this parish, almost if not quite continuously, until two years before he died, at the age of eighty, in 1822.¹ But these facts show that others, who might have lost all hope, as good and faithful men have sometimes been forced to do, proved their essential fidelity by gathering again about the standard of the Prayer Book. What had been probably the darkest period of our history was now over.

On the sixteenth of May, 1798, it was voted that "Mr Friend Collens and Tim^o Johnson be a Committee with the Wardens to repair the publick Building belonging to" the congregation. If the phrase "publick Building" describes the church (and I do not know what else it can mean), it seems to show a somewhat secularized conception of things ecclesiastical, such as was common enough in those days. We wonder, too, whether the dilapidations of the war had gone so long unrestored. If so, there had certainly seemed to be no help for it, and the present action exhibits the reviving courage and higher purpose of the people. At the beginning of the next year (1799) rates were levied by the parish, as the existing law permitted, and a committee was appointed, consisting of the two last named, "to consult with the other parishes Respecting a Minester." The "other parishes" were probably North Guilford and Branford, nothing more being heard of Killingworth. A word should be said here of those who may be called the second founders of the parish, though others entitled to mention must be passed by without notice. Thomas Powers, evidently at this period the leading man, was not of Guilford stock, having come here from Groton upwards of thirty years before. Charles Collins, his associate in the wardenship, was, it would seem, one of the younger children of Samuel Collins, the first clerk of the parish. Friend Collins was the grandson of Oliver Collins, the brother of Samuel, and his descendants remain among us. Timothy Johnson was, I suppose, the grandson of Captain Johnson by his son Nathaniel, and though a much younger man than the others, was now clerk, and a very com-

¹ *Christ Ch. Rec.* (old and new); *Smith's Hist. of Guilford*, 110.

petent one. The old families of the parish were therefore active and useful, while it was proving the value of new blood. No vestrymen had been elected at this date, the parish contenting itself, as at the beginning of its history, with churchwardens and clerk.

In the years 1799 and 1800 the Rev. Ashbel Baldwin, though now settled at Stratford, is believed to have disposed of some spare Sundays at Branford. And on the third of December, 1799, "this Society" directed its "Committee" (chosen in November, and perhaps corresponding to a vestry), to engage Mr. Baldwin for ten Sundays of the next year. Our records do not inform us that the committee was successful, nor do those of Stratford help us. But as Mr. Baldwin almost at the close of his rectorship in the latter parish could give a third of his time to Trumbull (1821-2) it is highly probable that he gave a fifth of it to Guilford in the year 1800. Mr. Baldwin, so much in request in this neighborhood, was for years one of the most important members of our Diocesan Convention, and was six times elected secretary of the House of Deputies in the General Convention.¹ He is still pleasantly remembered here by descendants of his wife's family.

On the twenty-second of December, 1800, a committee was appointed to meet committees from Branford and North Guilford "to agree with them in procuring Mr. Burgis to preach with us." Thus steps were taken which led to the first rectorship of the present century, Mr. Nathan Bennett Burgess, represented to-day among our communicants by his daughter, Mrs. William Bushnell of Madison, being ordained the following month, and serving the parish for the next five years.² Although it carries us a little beyond our limit, it is proper to say that Branford seems never actually to have formed a part of the cure of Mr. Burgess, and that the new "North Bristol Episcopal Society," organized in July, 1800, promptly took its place. North Bristol (now North Madison) was then part of this town-

¹ *Christ Ch. Rec.*; *Bailey's Trinity Ch.*, 32; *Jour. Conn. Conv.*, 1822, p. 6; *Sprague Annals*, v. 352; *Bishop White's Memoirs of the Protestant Episcopal Ch.* 2d ed., 43, 47, 50, 209, 216, 224. MS. notes in my copy of the *Memoirs* show that Mr. Baldwin disliked the drudgery of his office.

² *Christ Ch. Rec.*; *Jour. Conn. Conv.*, 1882, p. 161.

ship, and Episcopalians living there, and still farther east, in North Killingworth, had long been connected with St. John's parish. Before Mr. Burgess resigned there were large additions to the new congregation from North Killingworth, and what is now known as Emmanuel Church was built a little east of the Hammonasset (which forms the boundary), in 1804. That parish has therefore no historical connection with the earlier congregation at Killingworth (Clinton), though when the town was divided the northern portion took the ancient name, and the present Killingworth church has sometimes been confounded with that gathered by Bela Hubbard on the shore.¹

The numerical strength of this parish, at the close of our last period, can only be vaguely estimated. Three years later, on the first of January, 1804, a list of parishioners was begun, which contains eighty-seven names, but it is not probable that all were members of the congregation at one time. In the spring of 1807 (March or May), a few months before the Rev. David Baldwin began his long and faithful rectorship, the parish contained forty families; in 1811 there were forty-eight, North Killingworth then having forty-nine. On the whole, taking into account the depressed condition of the church in the last decade of the eighteenth century, it seems a fair inference that it numbered much less than forty families in 1800, and that it rapidly gained strength under Mr. Burgess.²

The new names which appear during this period are nine; Parmelee, Halleck, Handy, Lee, Ames (or Amis), Hoadley, Loyzell, Spencer and Loper. More than half of them have now disappeared, and many which have long been household words among us are absent from the records during the first half century. One individual name, foremost from the beginning, accompanies us almost to the close of our story. Captain Nathaniel Johnson, having passed his eighty-eighth birthday, laid aside a heavy load of age and misfortune on the twenty-ninth of June, 1793. He survived his associate, William Ward, by more than thirty years. Edmund Ward had died in 1779;

¹ *Ibid.*; Bailey's *Trinity Ch.*, 32; *Emmanuel Ch. Rec.* (kindly communicated by Rev. W. C. Knowles, rector); *St. John's Ch. Rec.*

² *Christ Ch. Rec.*; *Journ. of Conn. Conv.*, 1811, Reprint, p. 65.

Samuel Collins in 1784; Dr. Samuel Johnson, at least as much concerned as any other native of Guilford in the task of laying foundations here, in 1772. Captain Johnson may have been, as it was fit that he should be, the last survivor of those whom higher hands had framed into this our spiritual house fifty years before.

In closing this long narrative, defective in spite of its length, I need only say that the qualities which in a manner compelled the church to live, and to live on for five generations, when hostility and neglect combined with poverty and disappointment to crush its life, are present in vigor to-day, as the admirable achievement of the last few months has shown. We can trust them to endure, and to perpetuate the life which they have maintained, for five generations more, if they are still nourished by that fear of God, and that love for the ordinances of Christ, in which the life of this church began. It will still live, and still glorify God and bless men, only as it still bears the dew of its birth.



WILLIAM G. ANDREWS, D. D.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

Mr. Burgess seems to have held the rectorship until September 1, 1805. He was born on the fourteenth of September, 1771, in that part of Woodbury which is now Washington. He continued to reside in Connecticut, where he served two or three parishes, until 1835. He was then transferred to the diocese of New York, and long officiated in that portion of it which is now Central New York. He died in Utica, February 20, 1854, at the age of eighty-two. "His end was calm and peaceful."

I am informed that Mr. David Baldwin began to serve the congregation in November, 1806. At that period candidates for orders were allowed to preach, as do Congregational licentiates, and though Mr. Baldwin was formally declared the choice of the parish for its minister on the twelfth of the following March, he was not ordained deacon until the first of September, 1807. He was a native of Litchfield, where he was born February 4, 1780, and he was the son of William Baldwin, a first cousin of the clergyman so often mentioned in the latter part of the address. His cure was the same as that of Mr. Burgess, including therefore North Guilford and North Killingworth, then still sometimes called North Bristol. In this cure Mr. Baldwin may be said to have remained throughout his ministry of half a century, since he held the last-named parish until 1858, when the infirmities of age compelled him to desist from pastoral work. He resigned the Guilford church, however, at Easter (March 30), 1834, immediately taking that at Branford, to which he gave a third of his time for the next four years. He relinquished North Guilford in 1851, but when he finally retired in 1858 he united

the cure of Zion Church, North Brauford, with that of Killingworth. At this date, Bishop Williams, describing him as "The Senior Presbyter of the Diocese," said that he "carried with him into his retirement the affectionate veneration of his brethren, and the blessing of those to whom he had so long and so faithfully ministered." His home continued to be at Guilford, where in 1816 he had married Ruth, the daughter of Wyllis Elliot (a member of a family first named on our records in 1803), and where he died on the second of August, 1862. His connection with this community, and in some sense with this congregation, therefore lasted almost fifty-six years, throughout which he was to all men a model of Christian fidelity. And the members of his widely scattered flock, whom he never neglected in heat or cold, in sunshine or storm, though often exposed, as he went to and fro on horseback, to severe hardship, and to whom his house was open for unstinted hospitality, found in him a noble example of that unswerving devotion to pastoral duty which distinguished the early representatives of Connecticut churchmanship.

From the first of July, 1834, until Easter Monday (April 21), 1835, the parish was under the care of a deacon, who was ordained at the former date, and who preached his first sermon in the old church on the Green, Lorenzo Thompson Bennett. For the first time this congregation now claimed the entire service of its minister. Mr. Bennett was temporarily separated from a people already warmly attached to him, by an invitation from Trinity Church, New Haven, of which he became assistant minister. Three short rectorships followed. On the nineteenth of May, 1835, the Rev. William Nassau Hawks was chosen rector, but the failure of his voice compelled him to resign in the following October. Mr. Hawks was a native of Newbern, North Carolina, and the brother of two distinguished clergymen, both of them, like himself, canonically connected for brief periods with this diocese. One was Francis Lister Hawks, very eminent for many years in New York. The other was Cicero Stephens Hawks, for nearly twenty-four years Bishop of Missouri. Mr. Hawks returned to his native state, where he was able after a while to resume his ministry. During the latter

part of his life he was rector of Trinity Church, Columbus, Georgia. He died, as I infer, early in the year 1866. On the twenty-seventh of March, 1836, the Rev. Levi Hannaford Corson assumed the rectorship, which he seems to have retained until the nineteenth of March, 1838. Mr. Corson was ordained in this diocese in 1831, and had served the parish at Windham. While here he conducted a school, and I am told by one of his pupils, Mr. Henry Rogers, formerly of Stony Creek, and now of New Haven, that he furnished the design of the present church, adapting it from that of St. Thomas's Church, New York, of which Dr. F. L. Hawks was then rector, and which stood on the corner of Broadway and Houston street. The corner-stone of our church was laid during Mr. Corson's rectorship, June 24, 1836, and Mr. Bennett came from New Haven to deliver the address. Mr. Corson removed from Guilford to Branford, where he succeeded Mr. Baldwin, and where he remained about two years. He resided in the parish, as Mr. Baldwin had not done, and "the parish flourished under his ministry." About 1840 he was transferred to Western New York, and before 1856 to Michigan, where he continued his labors nearly thirty years longer, for the last ten years at Jonesville. He died February 23, 1884, in his eighty-third year. On the eighth of April, 1838, the Rev. Edward J. Darken, M. D., recently rector of Reading and Weston, took charge of the parish, of which he continued rector until the tenth of June, 1840. During his rectorship the new church was consecrated by Bishop Brownell, December 12, 1838. In accepting his resignation the vestry testified to the value of his "public ministrations." He remained for several years in Connecticut, though not in charge of a parish, and, if I mistake not, engaged in the practice of medicine. He continued, however, to be a clergyman, and about 1844 was transferred to the diocese of Massachusetts, and almost immediately, as it would seem, to that of Illinois, thence going to England, of which country he is said to have been a native, and where he is supposed to have died.

On the twelfth of July, 1840, the Rev. L. T. Bennett was heartily welcomed back to this parish, and began his memorable rectorship of forty years. It was closed by his resigna-

tion, due to his advanced age, on the anniversary of his settlement, July 12, 1880. He was still connected with the parish as rector-emeritus, and assisted at the celebration of the Holy Communion the day before his death, which occurred very suddenly on the second of September, 1889. He had then nearly completed his eighty-fourth year, though apparently as vigorous in body as he was in mind. Including his service here during his diaconate, he had been a minister of this parish only about three weeks less than half a century, while his ministry and Mr. Baldwin's cover more than three-quarters of a century. In what belongs to outward progress the most noteworthy event of Dr. Bennett's rectorship was the erection, in 1872, at the cost of \$5,000, of a new chancel, in which the altar, the symbol and chief instrument of worship, was raised to its proper place, and which, as containing the two divisions of sanctuary and choir, gave room for all parts of worship within its own limits. But a still better evidence of the worth of his services to the congregation is the record of forty years of unbroken peace, accompanied by a growing diligence and zeal in all Christian labors. Of all that was admirable in Dr. Bennett's ministry it is impossible to speak here, but his Bishop's testimony, given at the Diocesan Convention of 1890, should be treasured in this parish: "Wherever he had served and wherever he was known, his memory is warmly cherished, and he is remembered with deep respect, as a godly man and a faithful and self-sacrificing 'minister of Christ.' As I stood by his grave on a calm, peaceful and bright day in September last—a day that was a fit emblem of his character and life—and committed his body to the earth to await its resurrection, there came to my mind the words of our Lord spoken of Nathaniel, 'An Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile.' " Dr. Bennett was born in Galway, Saratoga county, New York, November 13, 1805, though of Connecticut ancestry. His youth was spent in New Haven, under the pastoral care of Dr. Harry Croswell, of Trinity Church. He graduated at New Haven in 1825, and then received a commission in the navy, in which he served six or seven years. He began his theological studies under Dr. Croswell while still a lieutenant, and thus he belonged to Connecticut, as a man and

a minister, as truly as in his pastoral life he belonged to Guilford. A superb altar, made in Italy, has very recently been presented as a memorial gift, by his daughter, Mrs. T. H. Bishop, to the church in which her father was trained and began his service in the priesthood, and of which she is herself a member.

The present rector took charge on the Sunday after Easter (April 24), 1881.

The parish now numbers (according to the report presented to the Bishop in June, 1894,) one hundred and ten families, with one hundred and sixty-five (registered) communicants. It holds property which had yielded, during the year ending last Easter, \$523.62, and the total amount of income and contributions for that year was \$2,299.08.

NOTE—The publisher is indebted to Miss Elizabeth M. Beardsley of New Haven for the engraving of Dr. Johnson. It was prepared for the late Dr. Beardsley's *Life and Correspondence of Samuel Johnson*, and was kindly forwarded by Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., of the Riverside Press, Cambridge. The cut of the present rector of Christ Church was loaned by the Rev. J. Frederick Sexton, of St. Peter's Church, Cheshire, editor of *The Rector's Assistant* (now *The Connecticut Churchman*), in which it first appeared.

POSTSCRIPT.

Since this address was put in type I have found reason for believing that the admission to the Lord's Supper of those who owned the covenant was not uncommon in Connecticut. Some portions of the address should therefore be considerably modified, though it is of course impossible, now, to make the changes.

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